

**WHICH
DIGITAL
CAMERA?**

EIGHT LEADING MODELS UNDER £1,500 COMPARED

Issue 110

Digital SLR Photography

The Magic of Winter

CAPTURE WINTER AT ITS BEST: CRISP LANDSCAPES, SEASONAL PORTRAITS & MORE!



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Have a Merry Christmas everyone! Best wishes for 2016.

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WELCOME TO THE JANUARY 2016 issue of *Digital SLR Photography*. Like most of you, this month I'll be balancing the usual demands of work with excessive Christmas shopping and (hopefully) excesses of food and drink! With any luck, our latest issue will be part of your festivities – with lots of technique guides, inspirational articles and stunning images for you to enjoy. Our *Countdown to Christmas* provides 12 great ideas on seasonal shots for you to capture during the festive break, from family portraits to winter landscapes. As always, our *Photo Skills* offer a mix of indoor and outdoor techniques to try too. If you're willing to brave the cold, you'll discover that winter offers all kinds of great opportunities, from dewy still-lives in the morning through to stunning sunsets at the end of the day. If you prefer to stay indoors, we've some creative ideas for you to try at home too. If you're planning on taking advantage of this season's sales, be sure to read our *Buyers' Guide* so you can make the right choice – our group test of extreme ND filters is definitely worth a look too. There's plenty more to entertain and inform you in this issue, so I'll let you read on. On behalf of all the team, we wish you all a safe and happy holidays. All the best!

Daniel Lezano **Editor**



Join a growing community

OVER HALF A MILLION FOLLOWERS AND GROWING! Get online and interact with the experts at *Digital SLR Photography*. You can follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/digitalslrphoto), tweet us on Twitter (@digitalslrphoto), join us on Flickr (flickr.com/groups/digitalslrphoto) or email us (dsirfeedback@dennis.co.uk) to keep up to date with all that's going on in photography.



ON THIS MONTH'S COVER...

This month's beautiful cover image was taken by regular contributor Helen Dixon and captures a frosty Richmond Park in December. If you want to try your hand at photographing winter landscapes, you can read our experts' advice in *Photo Skills* and *Countdown to Christmas*.



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You can get your monthly fix of *Digital SLR Photography* inspiration and advice direct to your door or mobile device by subscribing to our print and/or digital editions. We always have some great money-saving offers or free gifts for subscribers, too! For details, see page 104.



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CONTRIBUTING THIS MONTH:



Daniel Lezano

With over 30 years' experience as an enthusiast SLR photographer and 20 years on photo magazines, editor Lezano is as passionate as ever about photography, in particular portraits.



Caroline Schmidt

With extensive experience as a magazine journalist, contributing editor Caroline is passionate about photography and delivering an inspiring magazine each month.



Jordan Butters

With a finger always on the pulse of all things photography, Jordan turns his hand to most things: he's our social media master, features guru and talented pro photographer.



Ross Hoddinott OUTDOOR

He's not only an award-winning nature photographer, a leading expert in landscape and wildlife photography, he's a top tutor, too. rosshoddinott.co.uk



Helen Dixon LANDSCAPES

Helen is living the dream, having given up a full-time job to live in Cornwall and become a professional landscape photographer. helendixonphotography.co.uk



Kate Hopewell-Smith PORTRAITS

Nikon ambassador and leading UK lifestyle photographer, Kate leads a photographic workshop on page 56. katehopewellsmith.com



Colin Jarvis LANDSCAPES

A professional for ten years, Colin regularly runs workshops helping others to learn the craft of shooting landscapes and architecture. colinjarvis.co.uk



Roeselien Raimond NATURE

Dutch professional wildlife photographer Roeselien shares one of her favourite early-morning nature techniques on page 34. roeselienraimond.com



Dina Belenko STILL-LIFE

Russian still-life photographer Dina is a creative genius when it comes to bringing everyday objects to life and creating stunning compositions. 500px.com/arken



Tim Booth PORTRAITS

Professional leading portrait photographer Tim talks to us about his latest portrait project with a twist – it's quite literally a show of hands. timbooth.com



Richard Hopkins TESTS

With over 30 years' experience testing cameras on photography magazines, Richard's one of the UK's leading technical experts on putting photo kit through its paces.



Gear: Tested & rated

109 PRODUCT NEWS

The latest industry news, launches of photography equipment and gadgets that you will not want to miss!

110 THE BEST CAMERAS UNDER £1,500

There's a lot of great cameras to be had within this price range. Our guide highlights eight of the best to consider

118 GROUP TEST: EXTREME ND FILTERS

Once a highly-specialised technique, long-exposure photography has exploded in popularity. We test a range of extreme ND filters to reveal the best of the best



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Portfolio

Sea-Tron

By Chris Williams

www.cwexplorationphotography.com

"This image comprises several 30-second exposures taken from Rizal Park on a very stormy evening in Seattle. I took some liberties in the digital darkroom with this one. I really wanted to channel the movie *Tron* with the post-processing. I loved how they used light throughout the film, so I really tried to bring that into this image through colour and contrast manipulation in post-processing."

Sony Alpha 7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II lens.

Exposure: 30 seconds at f/8 (ISO 200).



IN ASSOCIATION WITH 500px





The Bend by Chris Williams

www.cwexplorationphotography.com

(Above) "Taken on a hike through the Enchantments area of Washington State, this image is of McClellan Butte, with waterfalls in the foreground flowing into Perfection Lake. I took it after intense sunlight burst through following strong thunderstorms – it made for an interesting night!"

Canon EOS 5D Mk II with Tokina 16-35mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: Four seconds at f/22 (ISO 100).

Tahoma by Chris Williams

(Left) "This image was taken high up in the Paradise area of Mt. Rainier National Park. It contains eight focus-stacked frames in order to record front-to-back detail. One neat thing about Paradise is the angle at which the sun sets behind the mountain, providing backlighting for one entire side."

Sony Alpha 7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8 II lens. Exposure: 1/20 sec at f/2.8 (ISO 1250).

The Vortex by Chris Williams

(Right) "While on Ruby Beach, on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State, I noticed interesting patterns in the current. I waded out to get near this exposed rock and played with the shutter speed to get a sense of motion. The sunset was incredibly intense and it burned far into the twilight hours."

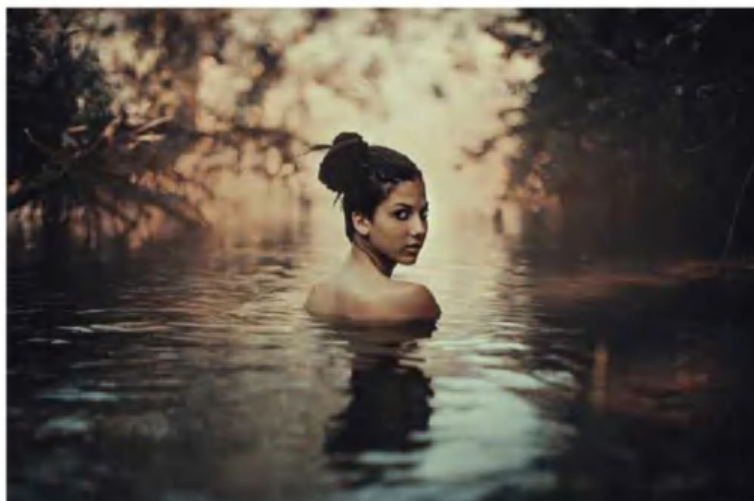
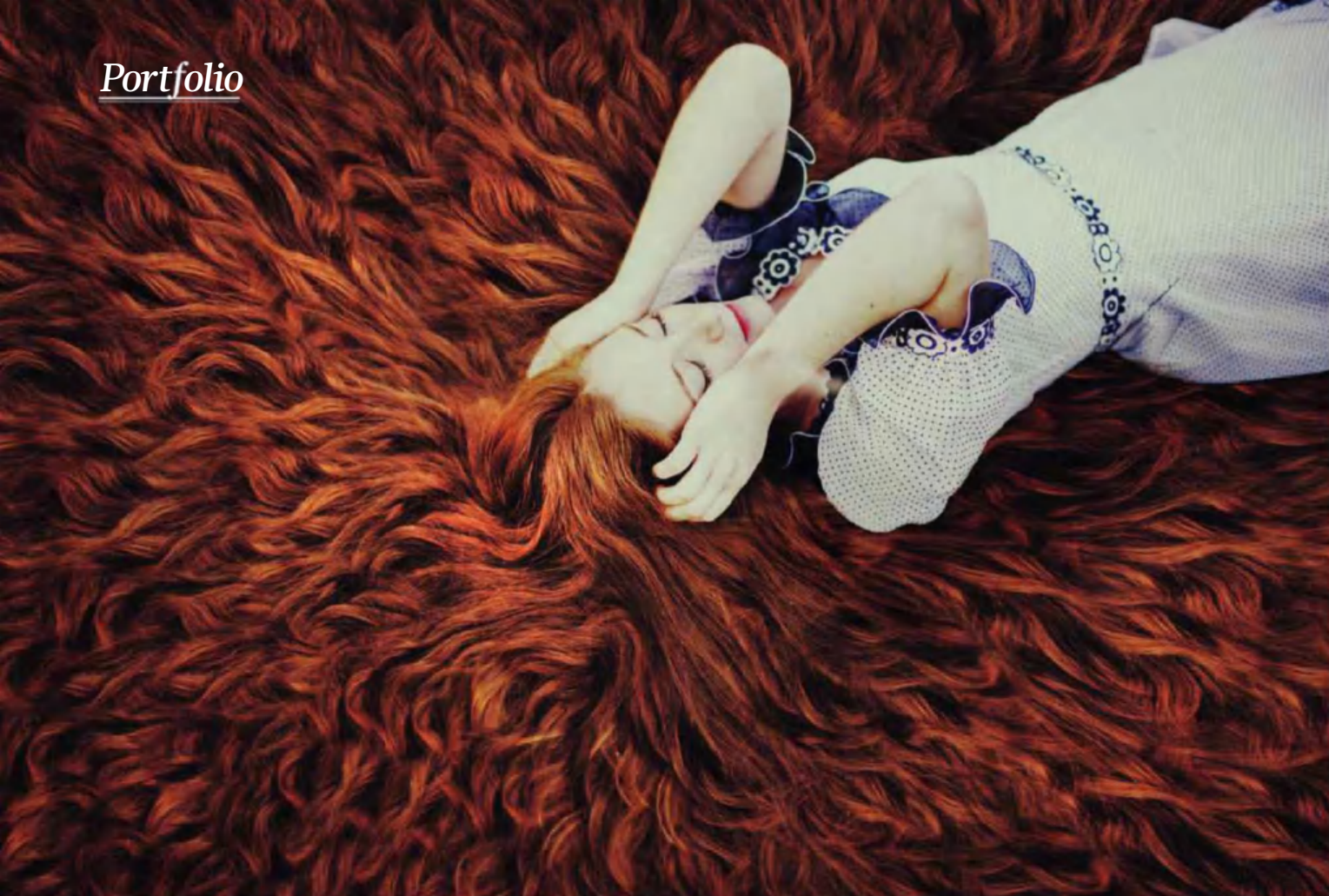
Canon EOS 5D Mk II with Tokina 16-35mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: Five seconds at f/22 (ISO 100).

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For more information on 500px memberships, visit: www.500px.com/upgrade





Ocean of Flames by Alessio Albi

500px.com/alessioalbi

(Above) "One of the few photo manipulations from my entire portfolio, this image was shot using only natural light, with my model laying down in a field. In post-processing I manually selected and cloned the waves of hair until they completely filled the background – it was a long and tedious process but I love the effect!"

Nikon D600 with NIKKOR 50mm f/1.4 lens. Exposure: 1/400sec at f/1.8 (ISO 320).

Galaxies by Alessio Albi

(Left) "I created these delicate particles floating in the air by using water sprayed through a fine-nozzled bottle. This was shot in a very dark room with a single ray of natural sunlight that pierced through from a high window. I placed my model on the very edge of the light ray so that the light was not too harsh on her face."

Nikon D810 with NIKKOR 35mm f/1.4 lens. Exposure: 1/320sec at f/1.4 (ISO 100).

Portrait of Carolina by Alessio Albi

(Below left) "This is a simple portrait, taken in a shallow river near my home town. In order to achieve this intimate angle I had to get down into the water myself, being sure to keep my camera and lens above the surface. I used natural light and post-production was relatively simple – just a few tweaks were made to the colours to stylise the image."

Nikon D600 with NIKKOR 50mm f/1.4 lens. Exposure: 1/1000sec at f/1.4 (ISO 100).

Portrait of Lisa by Alessio Albi

(Right) "This portrait was also taken using direct natural light. Although the pattern in the light looks like it was from a window or blind, it was actually created by positioning a piece of kitchen apparatus in front of her face! See if you can guess what it was! Post-production involved some basic tweaks to the colours and that's it."

Nikon D810 with NIKKOR 85mm f/1.8 lens. Exposure: 1/2000sec at f/2.5 (ISO 200).



Portfolio

Loch Voil by Neil Barr

www.neilbarr.co.uk

(Right) "Shooting into the sun is difficult at the best of times, but especially when your filters are old and scratched! To avoid glare I decided to remove all my filters and kept my aperture as wide as I could allow; it was one of my first attempts at exposure blending." Canon EOS 6D with EF 16-35mm f/4L lens. Exposure: 1/6sec at f/16 (ISO 100).

Knapps Loch by Neil Barr

(Below left) "The mist and light was constantly changing over this little loch and I was running about from place to place trying to capture as many different shots as I could. I've since become a little more focused in how I plan and shoot."

Canon EOS 6D with EF 24-105mm f/4L lens. Exposure: 1/640sec at f/8 (ISO 100).

Loup of Fintry by Neil Barr

(Below centre left) "I shot this image using a six-stop ND filter. Although supposedly neutral, I knew that it could sometimes add a warm colour cast, which actually helped boost the sunset colours. Most of my time was spent wiping spray from the lens and fighting off the midges!"

Canon EOS 6D with EF 16-35mm f/4L lens. Exposure: Five seconds at f/11 (ISO 100).

Loch Ard by Neil Barr

(Below centre right) "I had this shot in mind for a while but I was waiting for autumn colours and a calm, misty morning. I hoped to catch the light shining down the loch and was lucky to get it as just minutes before I took the shot, the scene had been hidden by fog."

Canon EOS 6D with EF 24-105mm f/4L lens. Exposure: 1/40sec at f/11 (ISO 100).

Eilean Donan Neil Barr

(Below far right) "I arrived early at Eilean Donan, in Scotland, and I could see by the way the clouds were moving and the light was changing that it would create some great highlights. I shot from low down to capture the colour and texture of the seaweed in the foreground."

Canon EOS 6D with EF 16-35mm f/4L lens. Exposure: 1/15sec at f/11 (ISO 100).

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Snapshots

YOUR MONTHLY PHOTO DIGEST



© DMITRY MOISENKO



© NICHOLAS ROEMMELT



© MONIS MAHARWAN



© MATTHEW SMITH



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AWARD
RESULTS

EPSON PANO AWARDS 2015

A SELECTION OF MESMERISING ELONGATED IMAGES
REPRESENTS THE BEST OF THE BEST WHEN IT COMES
TO PANORAMIC PHOTOGRAPHY. PREPARE YOUR
EYES FOR A FEAST, AS THE RESULTS FROM THE EPSON
INTERNATIONAL PANO AWARDS 2015 ARE IN...





© CARLOS F. TURLENZO



© DARREN MOORE



© DARREN MOORE



© MATEUSZ PIESIAK

SOME SCENES ARE so incredible that seeing a limited perspective of them never quite feels enough. Thankfully, this isn't a problem when viewing the cream of the crop from the 2015 Epson International Pano Awards – sweeping vistas, breathtaking views and jaw-dropping wide-angles are recorded in their vast glory for all to enjoy.

If you've ever tried shooting a panorama yourself then you should be able to attest how tricky they can be, especially when dealing with technical challenges such as changing light, moving subjects and lens distortion. Some of the winning images from this year's competition left us asking – how?

This year's awards attracted a huge number of entries – 4,345 to be precise, from 1,055 different photographers in 60 countries. The competition, now in its sixth year, seeks to reward those who have truly mastered the art of the panoramic photograph.

The competition was split into three groups – the Open Awards, the Amateur Awards and a VR/360 Award. Entrants had two categories to choose from within the Open and Amateur groups: Nature/Landscapes or Built Environment/Architecture. A total prize pool worth over USD\$50,000 was up for grabs, USD\$20,000 of that being cold, hard cash!

It is Max Rive, from the Netherlands, who takes home top honours in the Open group, also scooping the Nature/Landscapes category with his six-shot stitched panorama, entitled *The Ice Prison*, which was taken in the Himalayas, Nepal. British photographer Darren Moore claims the Built Environment/Architecture category with his image of Broadway Tower in Worcestershire. In the Amateur group, Mateusz Piesiak of Poland wins the Major Amateur award for his truly captivating image submitted into the Nature/Landscapes category, while John Finnan

1) Max Rive's *The Ice Prison* took overall top honours. 2) *Lighting the Way* by Carlos F. Turienzo won the Jeff Mitchum Fine Art Prize. 3) Darren Moore came runner-up in the Open competition. 4) And won the EPSON Digital Art Prize too. 5) The Amateur competition was won by Mateusz Piesiak.

from Australia takes the Amateur Built Environment/Architecture prize. The VR/360 Award goes to Dmitry Moiseenko of Russian for his amazing 360° interactive panoramic of the eruption of Kluchevskaya Sopka in Russia – the highest active volcano in Eurasia.

A further prize of USD\$5,000 cash and the Jeff Mitchum Fine Art Prize was awarded to Carlos F. Turienzo from Spain, and Darren Moore bagged the EPSON Digital Art Prize and USD\$1,000 cash too – not bad for a day's work!

There were far too many stunning entries for us to showcase them all here. To view them for yourself, and to find out more about the world's biggest panoramic photography competition, visit: www.thepanoawards.com

TAKE A VIEW

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS HIGHLIGHTS THE OUTSTANDING BEAUTY OF THE BRITISH ISLES

MANY OF US dream of travelling to far-flung destinations to pursue our photography in exotic locations, but we often fail to see the myriad potential that lies on our own doorsteps. Thankfully, the annual Take a View Landscape Photographer of the Year awards remind us that Great Britain boasts some of the most diverse and photogenic scenes in the world. With 28 World Heritage sites, 15 National Parks and 12,400km of coastline, we've got a lot to be thankful for!

This year's awards were held in conjunction with Visit Britain and the Countryside is GREAT campaign. The aim was to showcase the best of British talent capturing British scenes, to encourage people from all over to bring their cameras and visit this great nation.

The ninth Landscape Photographer of the Year was named as Andy Farrer from Cumbria, for his stunning image of snow-capped cliffs on Dorset's Jurassic Coast. Alongside the title, Andy nets himself a cool £10,000. Founder Charlie Waite commented: "Andy's winning photograph of this beautiful area of Dorset's Jurassic Coast is a gentle image with a simple, effective composition that reflects the mood of a cold, winter's morning. It is believable and appealing, with the snow adding an interesting dimension to a classic scene."

The winning images are now on display in a free exhibition at London Waterloo station, until 7 February 2016. There's also a book available displaying the winning images: *Landscape Photographer of the Year: Collection 9* by AA Publishing is available now, priced at £17. For more information and to view all of the winning and shortlisted images, visit: www.take-a-view.co.uk



© CHRIS SHEPHERD



© ANDY FARRER

Call for entries



© SANGITA MITRA SARKAR

SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

Heralded by many as the world's most prestigious photography competition, the Sony World Photography Awards has opened its doors for entries once again. Alongside worldwide recognition, the awards boasts a USD\$30,000 prize kitty, coveted by the hundreds of thousands of photographers from over 170 countries that enter each year. There are five competitions – Professional, Open, Youth, Student Focus and National Award, with several categories within each to enter. Entries are open from now until 5 January 2016, with the exception of the Professional competition, which runs until 12 January 2016. For more details, visit: www.worldphoto.org



© EVAN TAYLOR

RED BULL ILLUME 2016

If action and adrenaline is your poison then you'd better start thinking about which images you're going to submit to the illustrious Red Bull Illume 2016 photography competition! Held every three years, the award aims to recognise and reward the greatest and most creative photographers working in the action sports industry. It isn't limited to just professionals however, so if you're a dab hand at capturing 'rad' moves and extreme action then this is your chance – there's even a new Mobile category for images snapped on a smartphone. Entries are open from now until 31 March 2016 – for more information, visit: www.redbullillume.com

CAMERA SALES ON THE DECLINE

SALES FIGURES FROM PHOTO'S 'BIG THREE' INDICATE THAT LESS PEOPLE ARE BUYING CAMERAS COMPARED TO LAST YEAR

SPECIAL REPORT

THREE OF THE world's leading imaging specialists have reported a downturn in camera sales. Canon, Nikon and Sony's recently released financial results all look to agree on one trend – less people have bought cameras so far this year compared to this time last year.

Following the release of the July to September 2015 figures, Canon reports a 17% drop in sales of interchangeable lens cameras – that being CSCs and DSLRs – compared with the same period in 2014, while compacts are down 29% year-on-year, resulting in a 24% downturn in total. Nikon's figures indicated a smaller, but still significant, decline at 11.1% across the range, while Sony reported a 27.2% fall in sales.

Across the board it's the compact camera market that remains in the most rapid decline, and it's no surprise with the huge rise in popularity of mobile photography. For many consumers, improvements in smartphone cameras and sensors have



“ACROSS THE BOARD IT'S THE COMPACT CAMERA MARKET THAT REMAINS IN THE MOST RAPID DECLINE”

replaced the need to own a dedicated compact camera.

According to figures from the Camera & Imaging Products Association (CIPA), sales of digital SLRs continues to fall, as they have done for the past few years, but things do look to be reaching a plateau. Interestingly, while mirrorless sales have enjoyed a surge

in popularity in the past two years, it looks to have been at the expense of DSLR purchases and, they too are now levelling off. Mirrorless models don't appear to have attracted any more consumers to the camera market, but have simply given people more choice and, it seems, converted previous compact and DSLR customers.

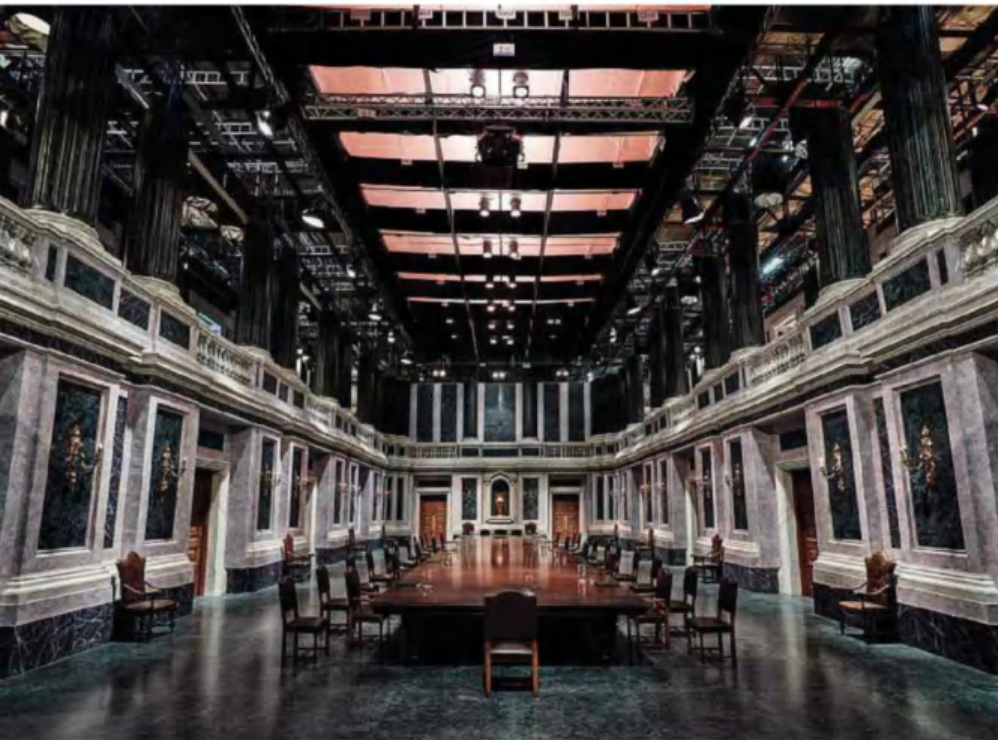
VIDEO OF THE MONTH

The Lab: DECOY

by Canon Australia

How is this for a neat idea? Canon Australia has devised a series of photography-based experimental videos, entitled *The Lab*. For their opening observation, they tasked six photographers with creating a portrait of one subject – they all had to use the same subject, wearing the same clothes, in the same environment, with the same kit. Nothing too ground-breaking yet you might think, but here's the kicker: each photographer was told a different story about the subject's background – from a self-made millionaire to a recovering alcoholic, even a psychic. The experiment's aim was to see how each photographer's perception of the subject affected the results of their portrait. The results are interesting to say the least – each photographer interacts with the character in a very different manner and the vast differences in the finished portrait that they create are astounding – one photographer even comments that he looks like a different person! There's an important message too that should resonate with all portrait photographers, and is something to remember when heading for your next shoot – a portrait is shaped more by the person behind the camera than the one in front of it. To view the video for yourself, visit: http://bit.do/DSLR_decoy





EXCLUSIVE BOND PRINTS ARE SOLD

BEHIND-THE-SCENES IMAGES FROM *SPECTRE* SELL FOR ALMOST £50,000

If you've yet to see the new James Bond movie, *Spectre*, and want to avoid any and all possible spoilers as to the plot line, then you might want to avert your eyes momentarily. A collection of five exclusive prints from behind the scenes at the filming of the 24th James Bond movie went on sale last month at auctioneers Phillips in London. The large-format prints, shot by photographers Jonathan Anderson and Edwin Low, show the detailed sets actually used during the filming of the movie, including a secret room, a Tangier hotel, Oberhauser's control room, a Moroccan set and the old MI6 building. The images represent an incredible collectible for any Bond fan. Having said that, you would need deep pockets as all five prints sold at the auction, netting a combined total of £47,500 – a pretty Money Penny indeed!



PRIME MINISTER 'POPPYGATE' SCANDAL

There's a recurring lesson that seems to revolve around public figures and image manipulation: if you're going to 'Photoshop' a public relations image, do it well and don't get caught. Prime Minister David Cameron is (yet again) facing embarrassment online after eagle-eyed social media followers spotted that the poppy apparently attached to his jacket lapel in 10 Downing Street's latest Facebook profile picture, wasn't actually there at all – it had been added in Photoshop. Downing Street quickly remedied the 'oversight', but not before the PM was subject to a spot of the usual online banter, at his expense.

Photo Hack!



BUDGET LAPTOP HOOD

If you've ever edited photos on a glossy laptop screen in a bright environment then you will know how frustrating it can be when all you can see is a reflection of the world behind you. It's a struggle to get anything done and turning the brightness up not only drains your battery quicker, it can also lead to poor editing as you might perceive the image to be brighter than it actually is. Dedicated laptop hoods are expensive, so here's a cheeky hack to get around the problem – next time you're at an IKEA store, pick up one of their DRÖNA storage boxes in black. They only cost £2.50, fold down completely flat and, when turned on their side, are the perfect size for anything up to a 15in laptop. There's a zip at the bottom too, for ventilating your machine or running cables through – perfect!

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YOUR AUTUMN IMAGES

DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY READERS HAVE BEEN BUSY KEEPING OUR TWITTER FEED, FACEBOOK PAGE AND FLICKR GROUP INUNDATED WITH A FLURRY OF AUTUMNAL COLOURS THIS MONTH! HERE'S OUR PICK OF THE BUNCH...



1) GARRY CHITTOCK: Gary's abstract autumn landscape really caught our eye on Twitter. "This was taken looking at a series of trees on the banks of the River Garry, Perthshire. I had the idea to try and capture the range of colour in the trees in a different style by panning using a tripod."

2) ALEXANDRA BOCHKAREVA: Shot on a cold autumn day, Alexandra stood on a bridge over a river to capture this overhead seasonal portrait before sharing the results on our Flickr group.



3) JOSU PERIANES: Josu recorded this colourful autumn forest scene using a long exposure so as to capture the motion in the rushing waterfall flowing towards him.

4) PAUL BARSON: We spotted Paul's image on our Facebook page – it was created by focus-stacking seven frames at f/8 for front-to-back autumnal detail.

5) CHRISTOPHER TURZAK: Christopher used a creative double-exposure technique to capture this dreamy image of golden leaves in North Vancouver, BC, Canada.

6) ROB PERRY-GRIFFITHS: Rob took this misty wildlife shot in Wollaton Park in Nottingham using his Canon EOS 750D.

Top Tweets



Anna Heath @spannarama

Thank you @DigitalSLRPhoto for the inspiration for this shot – it pushed me over 1,000,000 views on Flickr today!



Laura Whisker @ltw_photography

My ever growing kit. My @Canon #eos 1200d needs some company! Next thing - #Macro lens! @DigitalSLRPhoto

Andy Brown @ABPhotosUK

BIG thanks to @DigitalSLRPhoto for publishing my #Sunset #Robin in the *Expert Critique* section of the Dec 2015 mag

Russell Gilmour @trumpetruss

Congratulations @KrisWorsley for your featured photograph in @DigitalSLRPhoto from a very proud former (music) student!

Su-Min Hwang @Windsbird

"The 18-55mm kit lens has a time and a place." The place is nowhere, and the time is never! #Photography #Lenses @DigitalSLRPhoto



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See more of Daniel's photographic journey at panasonic.com/GX8Cuba



LUMIX G



PHOTO BY DANIEL BERAHULAK, LUMIX GX8, 15MM, 1/320 SEC, f/1.8, ISO 800.



The Location Guide

The Fylde Coast

Lancashire's Fylde Coast offers photographers a taste of modern art, a history of the Fleetwood fishing industry and the faded grandeur of the traditional seaside resort – it's laden with potential at every point

LOCATION: THE FYLDE COAST, LANCASHIRE / **OS REF:** SD 30520 (OS EXPLORER 286, 296)



The Fylde Coast

The Fylde is a coastal plain in western Lancashire; a 20km square-shaped peninsula, bounded by the Ribble estuary to the south, the Irish Sea to the west, Morecambe Bay to the north and the Bowland hills in the east. It's easily accessible from the M55 via the M6. The miles of coastline offer wonderful photographic opportunities at all times of the year.

Start in the south at the town of Lytham, an affluent area of the coast with delightful muse houses, designer shops and wonderful seaside shelters. One not-to-miss feature is the jetty at the lifeboat station. It's best photographed on an incoming or outgoing tide so that you can decide which part of the jetty you want to be submerged. It is a safe location to shoot as the water never extends along the full length of the jetty – you can retreat if the waves start to lap at your boots!

Moving further up the coast brings you to St. Annes-on-the-Sea. St. Annes is a more commercialised seaside resort with a rather unfortunate green plastic-clad pier along with the typical selection of high-street shops. The pier, despite its cladding, has a number of photographic possibilities as long as you photograph in black & white and choose the furthest end! The pier makes for an excellent composition when the tide is high, when you can give it the Lee Filters 'Big Stopper' treatment for that deliciously surreal appearance. Be aware that you need a good high tide to get any depth of water (8-9 metres) so check the tide tables. Again, it's a safe area to photograph as, even at high tide, the water will only be a couple of feet deep so Wellington boots will be sufficient; you can leave your waders at home! Parking is plentiful and usually free along the promenade (north of the pier tends to be quieter than the south). The older part of the pier can be reached at low tide and makes a very interesting composition, particularly if you can capture it with some water around the base and a good sky.



- 1) **ST. ANNES:** A storm approaches the old pier at St. Annes.
- 2) **LYTHAM WINDMILL:** The mill houses the Lytham Museum.
- 3) **CENTRAL PIER, BLACKPOOL:** Although the waves are crashing, a long exposure creates a tranquil scene.
- 4) **ST. ANNES PIER:** This shot is only possible at certain times of year when the tide is particularly high.
- 5) **LYTHAM LIFEBOAT JETTY:** Compositions like this work really well when paired with a long exposure.

The next stop up the coast is the mighty Blackpool, which stretches for almost six miles from Starr Gate in the south to Bispham in the north. Blackpool provides endless photographic opportunities including such delights as the three piers, South, Central and North. Each pier has its own character but it is the Central Pier that holds the most interest – this is the only pier in the country that has a Ferris wheel actually built onto it. It is a very clever design because the pier itself doesn't hold any of the weight of the wheel: the weight is supported by separate steel piles driven into the seabed. Be aware that the



piers are privately owned so seek permission before taking photographs; they are usually accommodating for personal photography. It should be easy to find parking along the promenade, but normally has to be paid for. A highlight of the Blackpool calendar is the World Firework Championships in September and October and, of course, the magnificent Blackpool Illuminations – perfect for developing your night photography skills.

Travel further north along the promenade and it will take you through Bispham to Cleveleys. The major delight of Cleveleys is the art installation Mary's Shell. It is an 8m-long and 4m-tall steel sculpture by Stephen Broadbent – the shell is taken from



4

Useful Information

Where is it? The Fylde Coast is a square-shaped peninsula in western Lancashire, stretching from Lytham in the south to Fleetwood in the north of England.

Getting there: The M55 takes you into the Fylde Coast via Blackpool. It has the dubious accolade that the M55 is a motorway that ends in a car park (you'll see what we mean).

Places to eat and sleep: You'll not be short of accommodation and eating options in Blackpool. It caters for all budgets and tastes.

Local Camera Shops: There are numerous mainstream electrical retailers in Blackpool, but for specialist kit you'll need to call in to Wilkinson Cameras or Jessops in Preston just before joining the M55 motorway.

Weather and tide tables:
www.metoffice.gov.uk
www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast_and_sea/tide_tables

Start Shooting...

Things to shoot: Art installations, coastal defences and local architecture, industrial heritage, long-exposure seascapes, night photography and creative light trails in Blackpool.

When to go: The coast can be photogenic throughout the seasons, and at any time of day or night in the right conditions. Autumn and winter are particularly good times due to the changeable weather, high tides and stormy climate. Keep an eye on the tide tables to plan your visit.

Recommended kit: Wide-angle lens, telephoto zoom (in the region of 70-200mm), sturdy tripod, graduated ND filters and polariser, ten-stop Neutral Density filter for long exposures, a remote shutter release, outdoor clothing and good walking boots, waterproof camera cover, lens cloth for salt spray.



4



5

a tale in the book *The Sea Swallow* by Gareth Thompson and has words from the story etched inside. Once the tide goes out, you can climb inside and listen for the sounds of the sea and waves! It can be photographed at either high or low tide but the special time is when the tide is just starting to fill the bottom of the shell. Again, a long exposure gives a delicious milky effect to the water and, combined with fast-moving clouds, can make for a memorable image.

Parking is plentiful, especially for the shell as it is almost directly opposite the Jubilee Harvester Pub where you can park, have a coffee, wait for the tide and then nip across the road to capture the magic!

Colin Jarvis "Why I love the Fylde coast"



"The Fylde coast is up there with the best of coastal locations to photograph in the UK. Everything relies on the tide though, so planning your visit requires careful use of tide tables to get just the sort of shot you want. Whether it is ferocious waves battering the sea wall and groynes or the gentle lap of the water around a piece of public art, the Fylde has it all. Living close by allows me to visit in all weather conditions and I can

guarantee that any trip brings its own rewards, including colourful characters, a good helping of fish and chips and, of course, salt-sprayed lenses. The Fylde has a rich cultural and industrial heritage, from the faded grandeur of the South, Central and North piers in commercial Blackpool to the abandoned fishing vessels in Fleetwood and the genteel tranquillity of Lytham St. Annes. Whatever the weather, I can guarantee you an exciting and rewarding day spent with your camera on the Fylde." www.colinjarvis.co.uk

The Fylde Coast

Cleveleys's sea defences have recently been redeveloped and the sweeping steps and extravagant street lighting can make for an excellent composition against a setting sun. There are also numerous groynes and beach defences that can be given the Big Stopper long exposure treatment.

The final location along our Fylde Coast journey is the Wyre wrecks. These are a collection of beached fishing boats that have been left to rot since the Icelandic Fishing Wars of the 1970s (the Cod Wars) that decimated Fleetwood's trawler fleet. There are about four vessels in various stages of decay that can make for very atmospheric compositions. The location is a little tricky to find: the OS grid reference is OS Ref: SD 465 335. As you enter Fleetwood on the A585, turn right at the roundabout with the sculpture of a cherub and then the second left. It continues for about a mile past the civic recycling plant and eventually leads to a parking area and a nature reserve. Parking is free and there are plenty of spaces.

Don your Wellington boots or waders and head along the footpath towards the river Wyre. As you approach the river the boats should be visible. Be very careful to keep an eye on the tides, it is safe during low tide as the boats can be easily reached, but when the tide is in, it hides some deep gulleys that you will want to avoid. Good shots can be obtained at either high or low tide but waiting for the water to flow around the boats during a retreating tide can produce beautiful results.

There are many places to explore on the Fylde Coast; this guide only skims the surface. Give it a visit, we're sure that you will not be disappointed.

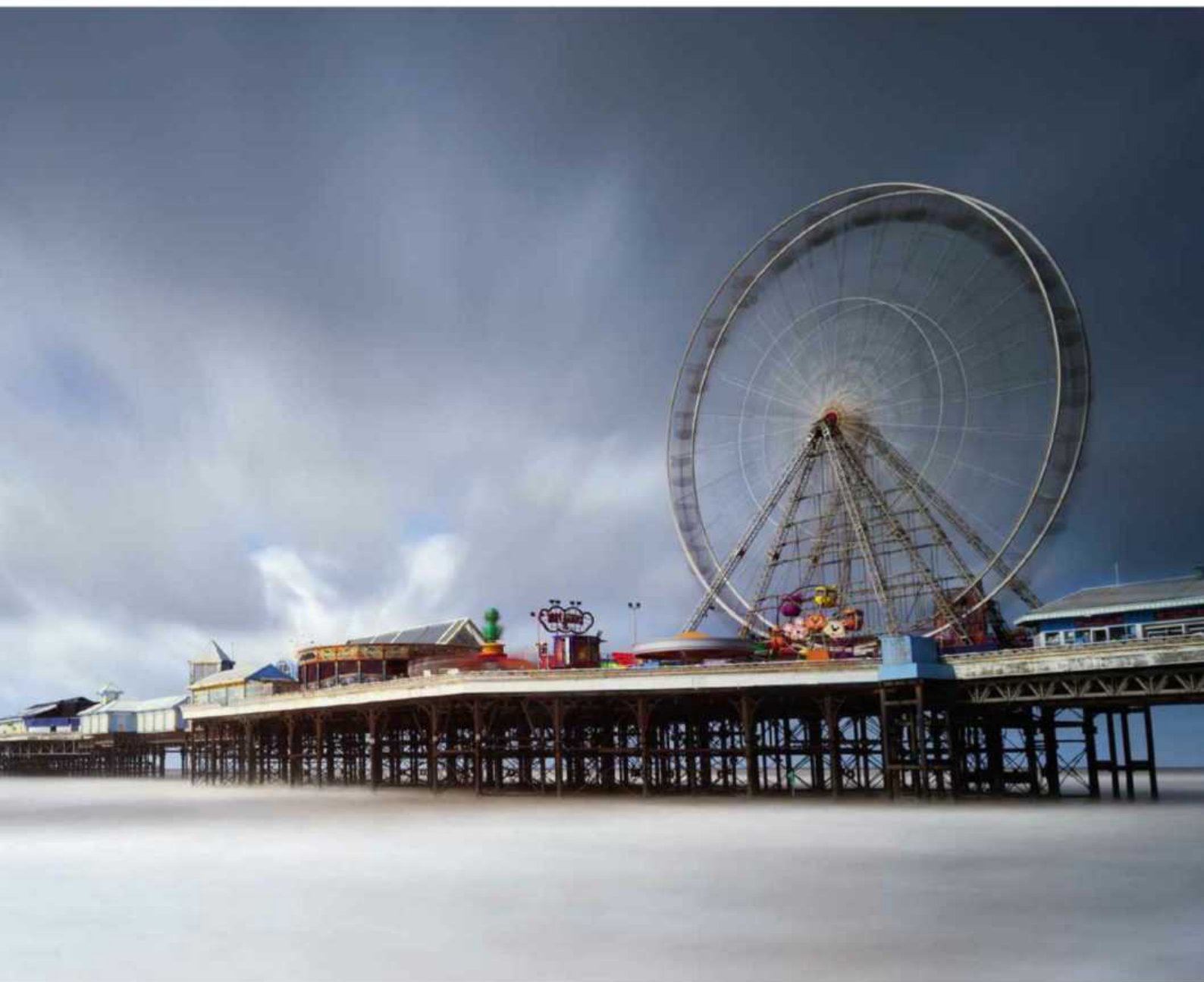
6) CENTRAL PIER, BLACKPOOL: A long exposure emphasises the movement in the wheel and clouds.

7) CENTRAL PIER AT NIGHT: With a long exposure like this, people are barely noticeable.

8) MARY'S SHELL, CLEVELEYS: A Big Stopper works well.

9) FLEETWOOD WRECKS: An infrared shot turns the grass white and brings out the detail in the sky.





Keep shooting! Other great locations around the Fylde coast



COLIN JARVIS

8
MILES
NORTH

1) ROSSALL POINT

In between Cleveleys and Fleetwood is the observation tower at Rossall Point. The tower has been designed to look as though it is leaning into the wind. There are two observation decks for bird watching and taking in the views over the Irish Sea and across Morecambe Bay.



COLIN JARVIS

20
MILES
NORTH

2) PLOVER SCAR LIGHTHOUSE

Further up the coast towards Morecambe stands the diminutive figure of Plover Scar lighthouse, a delightful structure that can make a beautiful shot with good light and cloud. There is free parking at the end of Slack Lane but the car park is locked at dusk, so be sure you've moved by then.



COLIN JARVIS

20
MILES
N.EAST

3) ASHTON MEMORIAL

Head further north to Lancaster, a great location to spend a few hours. Ashton Memorial, situated in Williamson's Park, is a delightful spot and you can plan a visit to the medieval castle, which houses the oldest sitting Crown Court in England and the Benedictine Priory Church.



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PHOTO SKILLS

IDEAS & ADVICE FOR BETTER PHOTOS

SEASONAL SUNSET *p30*

WINTER LIGHT IS MAGICAL SO MAKE THE MOST OF IT AND SHOOT A STUNNING SUNSET USING THE ADVICE FROM PRO ROSS HODDINOTT



p34 **DEWY SPIDERWEBS**

CAPTURE THESE DELICATE STRANDS IN DETAIL



p39 **CREATE A PROJECTOR PORTRAIT**

AN AT-HOME TECHNIQUE FULL OF IMPACT



p43 **SHOOT & EDIT SMOKE TRAILS**

CREATE SMOKE ART USING INCENSE STICKS



WINTER SUNSETS

PROFESSIONAL OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHER ROSS HODDINOTT TALKS ABOUT WHY NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO SHOOT THE GOLDEN HOUR AND THE TECHNIQUES YOU MUST KNOW TO CAPTURE COLOURFUL LANDSCAPES

CAMERA: NIKON D810 / LENS: NIKKOR AF-S 17-35MM F/2.8G



IT IS NO secret that dawn and dusk are the best times of day to shoot landscapes. While there will always be exceptions to this rule, at either end of the day, the light is typically at its very best due to the sun's low position. Not only is the light warm, soft and flattering, but during the so-called golden hours there is a good chance that the sky will light up with colour. Just prior to the sun rising and again after the sun disappears below the horizon, colour can radiate across the sky if gaps in the cloud allow it to do so. This can produce spectacular conditions for landscape photography, with the sky turning pink,

orange or deep scarlet. Nature can do things that Photoshop will never be able to achieve!

Unfortunately, the best conditions occur at the least convenient time of day – dawn and dusk. During summer, you need to get up crazily early to capture colour, or stay out unsociably late. This is just one reason why winter is the best time of year to shoot sunrise and sunset. During the winter months, dawn is normally between 7am and 8am. Even allowing sufficient time to reach your location and set-up in advance of the sun rising, you will rarely need to set your alarm earlier than 6am – a comparatively civilised time of day.

To capture the setting sun, you should get to your chosen location around an hour beforehand to allow you time to identify the best viewpoint. It will be dark again by 4-6pm, allowing you time to capture great shots, but still be home for dinner! Not only that, but the winter months have a habit of producing some of the best skies and conditions for landscape photography. Frost or snow can add a seasonal feel to your dawn shots, while dramatic skies are more common, making this the perfect time of year to shoot seascapes.

So what are you waiting for? Wrap up warm and get out with your camera soon!



1 PLANNING This is essential for success. Knowing the sun's position in advance will help you visit the right location at the right time, saving you from wasting opportunities, and there are plenty of apps to help you do this. I regularly use one called The Photographer's Ephemeris (TPE) – one of the most useful and popular applications for planning shoots. It is available for desktop use and as a smartphone app.



2 CHOOSE A VIEWPOINT Having looked at TPE, I knew that the sun would be setting out to sea. However, from my intended viewpoint, I calculated the sun would be hidden behind the headland when it set. With the sun hidden, it wouldn't cause any exposure issues or flare. And as I would still be shooting in its direction, any colour filling the sky at sunset would enhance my shots. All I had to do was wait and hope for a colourful sunset.

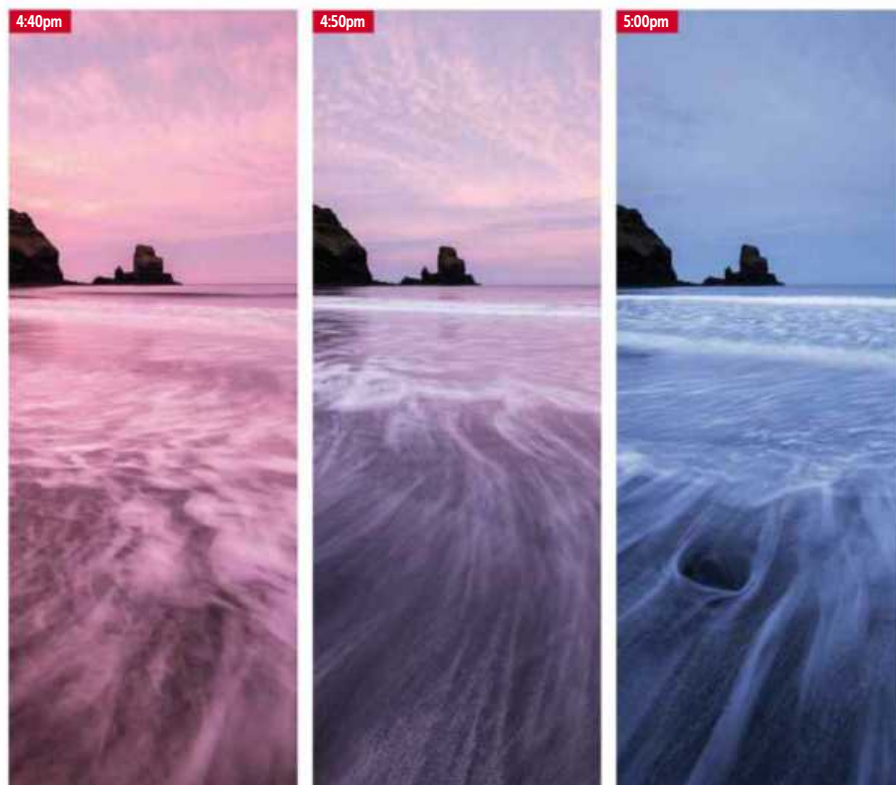


3 USE FILTRATION When shooting towards a bright, colourful sunrise or sunset, you will typically encounter a light difference between the bright sky and darker foreground. The level of contrast can be beyond the camera's dynamic range, making it tricky to correctly expose the scene. You could bracket and blend exposures in Photoshop, but I prefer to use graduated ND filters. Here I used a soft-edged three-stop graduated ND.



4 COMPOSE A colourful sky alone will not make a great landscape; you still need a strong, well-balanced composition. Scenes with water work well as they reflect the sky's warmth, so I got close to the water's edge. I opted for a simple composition, including a large amount of sky and water to make the most of the colour and reflections. The onrushing waves added further interest.

5 KEEP ON SHOOTING The colour doesn't last long (which is why careful planning and anticipation is key to a successful shoot), so you need to keep shooting. In this instance, the sky's colour lasted no more than ten minutes, but at sunset, warm oranges and pinks soon gave way to cooler shades of purple and blue, which have their own individual quality and beauty.



PRO TIP

It is always a good idea to visit or recce the location beforehand. In doing so, you will already know what route to take – both by car and on foot – which will help you with timings. You will also have an idea of the best viewpoint and a composition in mind, which will save time and help you be quick and efficient on location when shooting at dawn or dusk.

NATURE'S GLORY

A winter sunset provides glorious colours and beautiful landscape potential – plus you'll be home in time for dinner!

Exposure: Three seconds at f/14 (ISO 64)

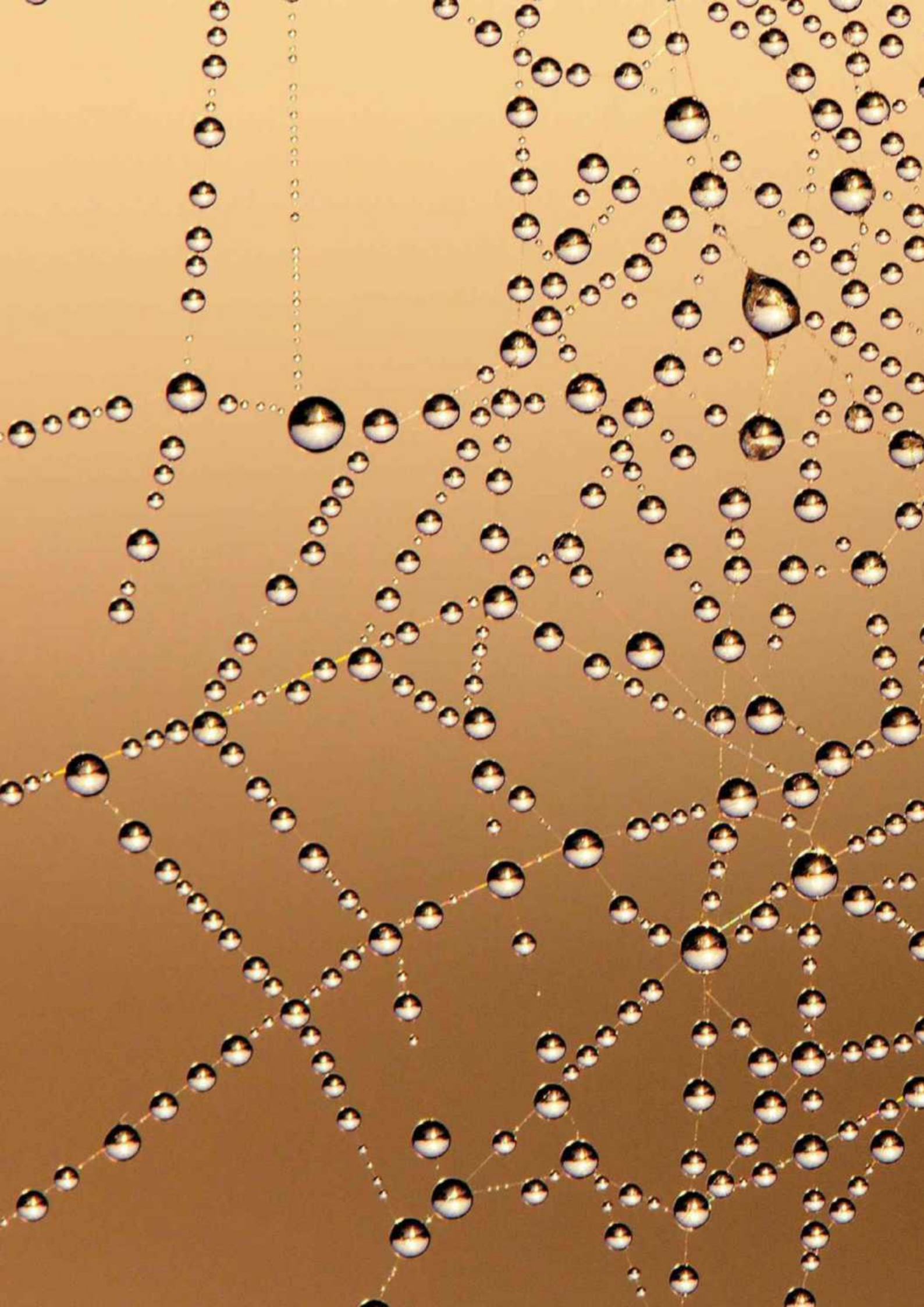




PHOTO
SKILLS

WORLDWIDE WEBS

PROFESSIONAL NATURE AND WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER ROESELIE RAIMOND SHARES ONE OF HER FAVOURITE EARLY-MORNING MACRO TECHNIQUES. THIS MIGHT NOT BE ONE FOR THE ARACHNOPHOBES...

CAMERA: CANON EOS 5D MK III / LENS: EF 100MM F/2.8L MACRO USM

SOME PEOPLE ASSUME that by constantly looking through a lens, we photographers miss much of the world around us. That couldn't be further from the truth, especially when the lens that you're looking through is of the macro variety. Viewing everyday items in macro reveals a whole world to explore, with details you didn't even know existed. Insects become fascinating alien-like species, flowers turn out to be true works of art and even simple water drops become boundlessly attractive. A small patch of garden can provide hours of fun and makes you ponder and appreciate the detailed world around you.

What's especially fun about macro photography is that even the most common subjects are suitable, many of which you can find in your garden. You've probably enjoyed the beautiful sight of cobwebs glittering in the sun on an early, dewy morning, but through a macro lens it's even more spectacular: the spider silk looks like liquid metal, sprinkled with tiny pearl droplets.

Now that the nights are getting noticeably colder and more humid there are more

opportunities for morning mist, which is essential for adding the dusting of moisture for a dewy cobweb image. To decide if it's a good morning to leave your warm bed early, keep a check on the weather forecast. Wait for cloudless nights when it cools to at least 10°C and, ideally, there should not be too much wind expected either. Needless to say, a beautiful sunrise adds a touch of backlighting and increases your chances of achieving that dream shot.

Drops of dew are really small and a dedicated macro lens with 1:1 reproduction will allow you to fill the frame. A camera with an APS-C sensor gives you the magnification factor that helps you to get closer to your subject, but one with a full-frame sensor (like mine) works fine, too. A tripod will come in handy when there isn't enough light to avoid camera shake, but if it's light enough you can shoot handheld, which is often easier with low-lying subjects. I would also recommend a plastic bag to sit on, or even wearing full waterproofs could be a good idea, given the fact that the location might be very wet – at least, that's what we are hoping for, isn't it?



1 WEB SEARCH Finding a spider isn't that critical, but the web should be in a location with a good amount of light and a clear backdrop – shooting from low down against the sky works perfectly. Heath, shrubs, trees, bridges, benches, traffic lights and even road signs are good places to look! Different locations will house different spider species, each with different shaped webs.



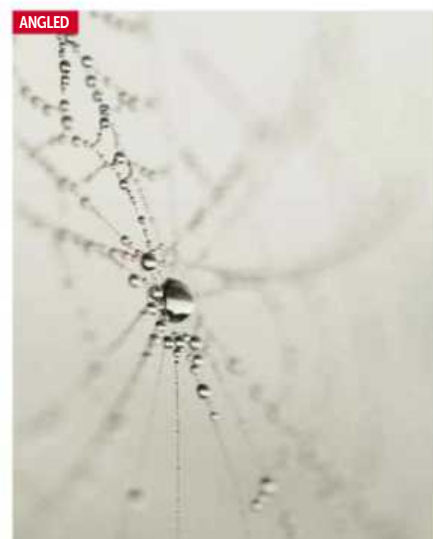
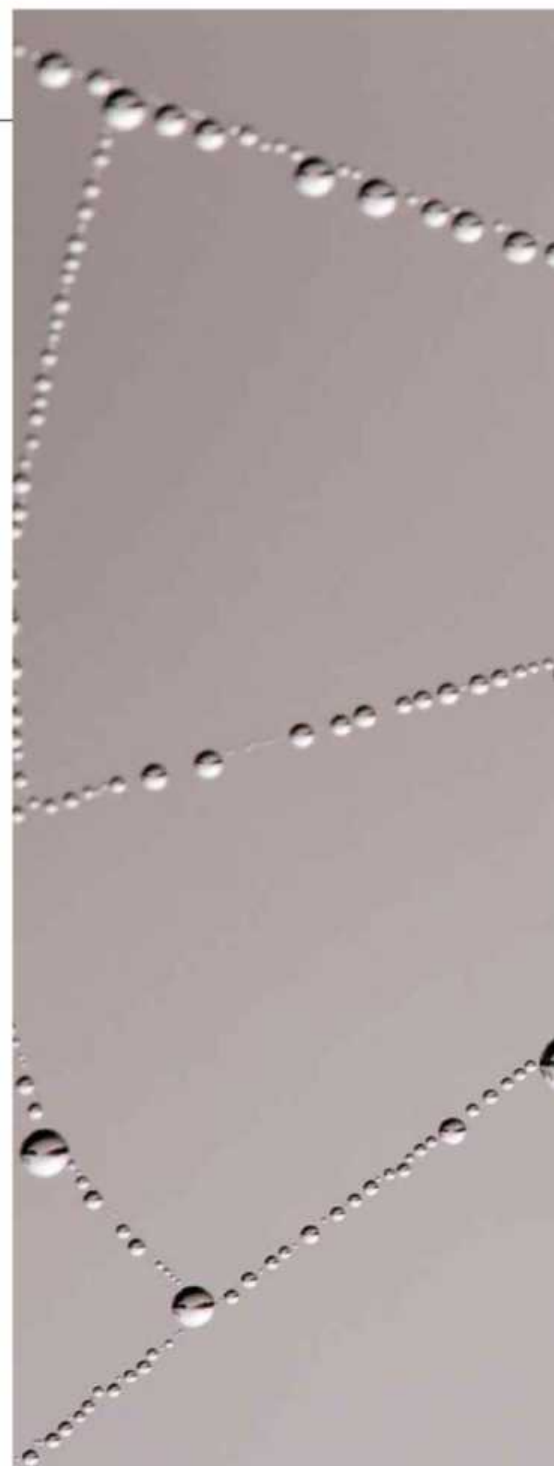
2 THE RIGHT LIGHT If the morning mist isn't too thick, you can use the warm morning light to add colour to your photos. A web in a wide-open space allows you freedom to choose the best angle and work with the light. Dewy webs suit backlighting well, but try out different angles and approaches and assess how the light affects the droplets of dew through your lens.

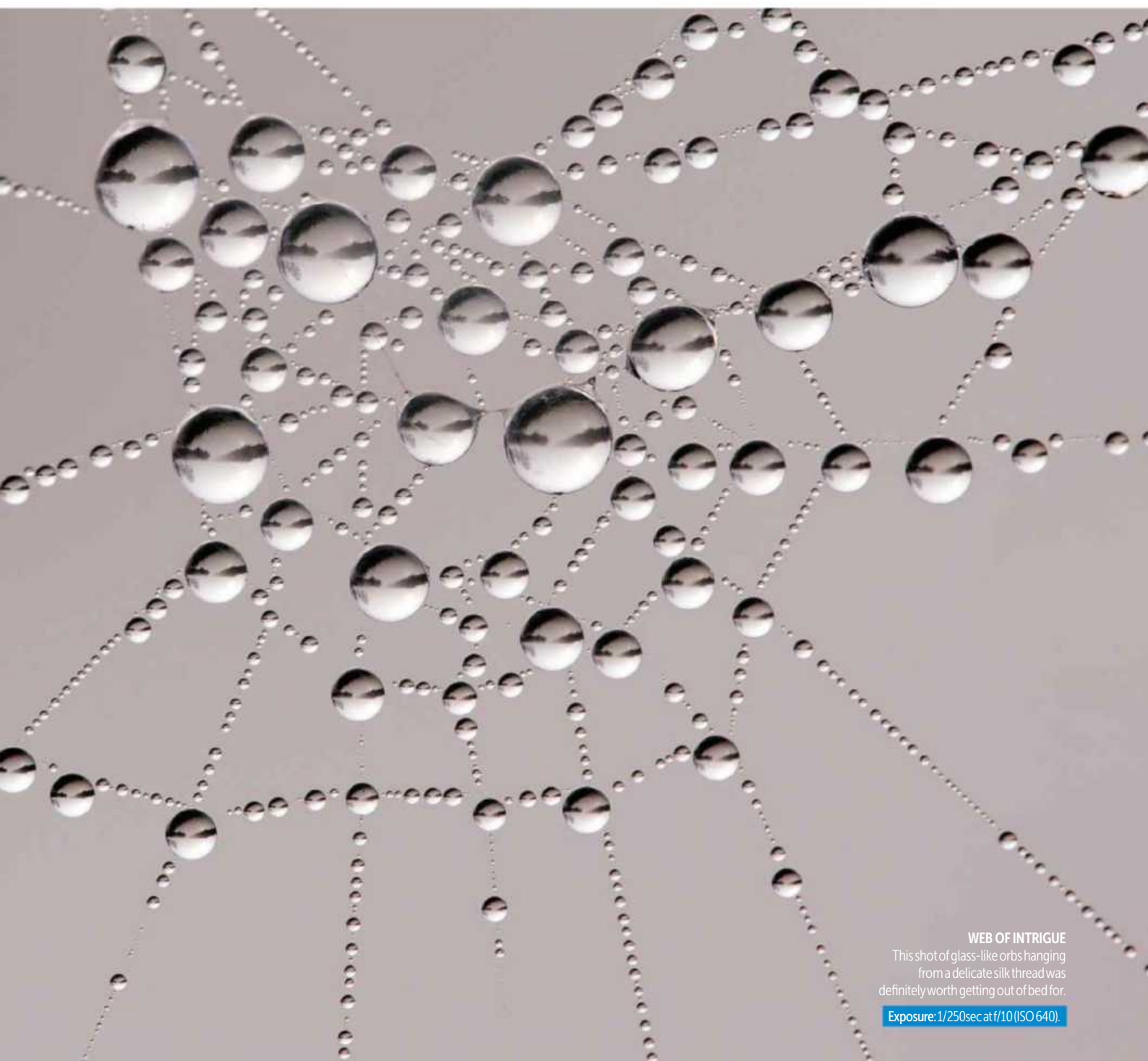


3 SETTINGS Select aperture-priority mode and choose a mid-aperture setting. Start at ISO 200 and increase the ISO rating to give you a shutter speed that eliminates both camera shake (if shooting handheld) and any breeze blowing the web. Depending on your background, you may need to use exposure compensation to control the exposure.



4 FOCUSING Your angle to the web will greatly affect the outcome of the image. If you want all of the drops to be in focus, then keep your lens parallel with the plane of focus that the web is on. Alternatively, position your lens at an angle to the web and focus on one droplet to create a silky smooth foreground and background bokeh.



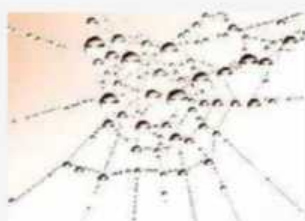


WEB OF INTRIGUE

This shot of glass-like orbs hanging from a delicate silk thread was definitely worth getting out of bed for.

Exposure: 1/250sec at f/10 (ISO 640).

COMMON MISTAKES TO LOOK OUT FOR...



1) OVEREXPOSURE With the sun rising higher every minute, the light becomes brighter and, while you are focusing on the dew, it's easy to forget about your settings. Regularly check your histogram to make sure the highlights aren't blown out and adjust your position, or apply exposure compensation, to suit.



2) FOCUSING ISSUES

These dew drops aren't much bigger than an autofocus point so it's no wonder that the AF system is having difficulty with these tiny subjects. Set the lens to manual focus, choose the desired distance and very carefully rock back and forth to find the sweet spot of focus.



3) DISTRACTING BACKGROUND

These eye-catching drops can easily make you forget about the background, resulting in messy photos. Keep an eye on the world behind the drops, too. Shooting against the sky, against a plain, or even distant background will help remove distractions.



4) POOR COMPOSITION

It's tempting to focus on a small group of drops and forget about the rest, which can result in an unattractive composition. A web consists of many threads that can literally serve as guidelines for composing – even small movements can completely change a composition.

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PHOTO
SKILLS

PROJECTOR PORTRAITS

HAVE THE LONG NIGHTS AND SHORT DAYS LEFT YOUR PORTRAIT PLANS A LITTLE DIM? JORDAN BUTTERS SHOWS YOU A FUN AND EASY INDOOR PORTRAIT TECHNIQUE THAT WILL GET THOSE CREATIVE JUICES FLOWING AGAIN...

CAMERA: NIKON D750 / LENS: NIKKOR AF-S 50MM F/1.4G / PROJECTOR: INFOCUS IN112 DLP

THE IDEA OF projecting light and images onto a person isn't a new one – for example, back in the 1960s, fashion and portrait photographer John French experimented with the idea of replacing his subject's clothes with patterned projections. Progressions in both camera and projector technology have now made projection portraits easy and accessible to all. Best of all, it's a cheap and simple technique to practise – all you need is a projector, a computer, a selection of images to try, your camera and a plain wall!

In terms of kit, a 50mm f/1.8 prime is ideal – it's a nice focal length for this type of image and it offers a fast maximum aperture, perfect for low light. Your choice of projector will have a bearing on the settings that you use – if you're using an LCD or LED projector then you have free reign over your choice of shutter speed, according to light levels, however DLP (Digital Light Processing) projectors are a bit more complicated. As DLP projectors emit light through a spinning wheel of colour, if you choose a shutter speed that is too fast you'll record those bands of colour. A shutter speed of around 1/50sec will completely eliminate this banding, but any speed under 1/100sec makes it almost unnoticeable.

There are a number of approaches that you can take when planning your projection portrait. You could choose to project bold patterns or graphics across your subject, with no mind to how and where the pattern falls on them. Alternatively you can project a specific image and line it up with your model – for example projecting a pair of wings onto someone's back. You can even try projecting a different face onto your subject's face – the results can be quite creepy!



1 CHOOSE A BANK OF IMAGES Before setting up your projector and getting your subject into place, pull together a collection of high-resolution stock images, or shots from your own portfolio, to project onto your subject. Bold, graphic colours and shapes work well, as do patterns or high-contrast images such as black & white handwritten scripts or sheet music, as I've chosen to use here.



3 ALIGN YOUR SUBJECT Move your subject into place and adjust the height and angle of the projector so that the image lines up. I used a wooden box to get the right height before fine-tuning the projector's adjustable feet. Once aligned, remember to refocus the projector so that the image is sharp on your subject, as the focusing distance will be slightly different, depending on their distance from the wall.



2 SET UP YOUR PROJECTOR Find a plain wall or backdrop, as close to white as possible, and set your projector up to point at it. The further the projector is from the wall, the larger the image appears, but the less powerful the light. The ideal balance is making the image just big enough to fill the frame when you shoot. Focus the projector image on the wall for the time being.



4 CAMERA SETTINGS Use aperture-priority mode to dial in a wide aperture – between f/1.8 and f/4 will work. Start at ISO 100 and take a test shot – if your image exhibits bands of strong colour, increase the ISO rating or close down the aperture to reduce the shutter speed. I found that a shutter speed of under 1/100sec removed most of the colour cast. If you're converting to black & white then this matters less of course.

COMMON PROBLEMS – THINGS TO AVOID...



1) WATCH THE EDGES When shooting, be aware of the angle that you shoot from so as not to include the edges of the projection in the frame. Adjust your angle, distance, or simply move the projector further back.



2) CHECK YOUR EXPOSURE Depending on your choice of image, you may have to use exposure compensation to control your exposure. Concentrate on your subject's skin tone as this is the most important area.



3) CHOOSING A SHUTTER SPEED If using a DLP projector, as I am, then your choice of shutter speed is crucial. Choose a shutter speed too high, such as this, and you'll see bands of bright colour due to the way the projector emits light.



4) MIND YOUR SHADOW If you step between the projector and your subject, your shadow will show in the frame – shooting from an angle to one side avoids this and provides more interesting light and depth.



HITTING THE RIGHT NOTE!

Allowing room for my model's shadow in the frame adds extra interest. A black & white conversion finishes things off.

Exposure: 1/100sec at f/2 (ISO 100)

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Sigma created the world's first ultra-wide-angle lens, the 21-35mm F3.5-4, back in 1979. Things have moved on a lot since then. Designed for both full frame and APS-C SLRs, this ultra wide-angle zoom lens features the latest optical technology and provides excellent performance. FLD glass, which has performance equal to fluorite, and SLD glass provide excellent correction of colour aberration. Aspherical lenses give advanced performance with a compact and light-weight construction and ensure high image quality throughout the entire zoom range. The Super Multi-Layer Coating reduces flare and ghosting and incorporation of HSM ensures quiet and high speed autofocus as well as full-time manual focus capability.

IT'S SMOKIN'

IF YOU CAN STEAL SOME TIME AWAY TO TRY A NEW STILL-LIFE TECHNIQUE, SMOKE TRAILS HAS IT ALL: CREATIVITY, FLASH AND FOCUSING CHALLENGES. CAROLINE SCHMIDT SHARES SOME TIPS FOR SHOOTING YOUR OWN

CAMERA: NIKON D800 / **LENS:** NIKKOR AF-S 85MM F/1.4G, NIKON SB-900 AND TRIPOD

SMOKE TRAIL SHOTS are an unpredictable art form – they require patience, skill and a lot of perseverance. But, get them right and you can get some spectacular, almost hypnotic, results. It's a quick technique to shoot: smoke trails can take less than 30 minutes to capture once you have your lighting right, then you can concentrate on

the post-production effects in Photoshop (turn to page 46 for details).

You'll need a camera, a tripod and a lens: a standard zoom will do, but I've chosen to use an 85mm a couple of metres away from the set-up nearer a window. The room you're working in needs to be well ventilated, especially if it's small, but your set-up should be away from any drafts that can interfere

with the smoke's movement. Ambient light also needs to be at a minimum otherwise it will interfere with the flash exposure, so make sure you have blinds or curtains to close at the windows. To get the smoke trails that you want, incense sticks are your best option as they last a lot longer and give you more opportunities to shoot more interesting frames than, say, an extinguished candle.



1 SET-UP In your well-ventilated room, set up a table and a black background; I've attached a black cloth on a background stand, but a couple of sheets of black cardboard can work too. Place the incense burner and stick about two- to three-feet away from the background and position your tripod-mounted camera in front. You'll need to be able to see the stick in the frame but have space above to capture the rising smoke.



2 CAMERASETTINGS It's a good idea to shoot in Raw+JPEG in case you need to make exposure adjustments, but there's no reason you cannot get these shots right in-camera. Set your camera to manual mode, ISO 200, a shutter speed of one second and a starting aperture of f/8. You may need to alter the aperture, and therefore the shutter speed, if you find the smoke naturally moves towards the camera to ensure most of it is in focus.



3 PLACE YOUR FLASH The angle of your flashgun is potentially the trickiest part as it determines the success of your shots. Start by setting your flash to manual and 1/8 power, then place it behind and lower than the incense stick. A flash with a tilting head will be an advantage. You need to avoid any light from falling on the backdrop or hitting your lens, so you may have to alter its position and flag the light if you're having trouble.



4 FIND YOUR FOCUS With all the lights on, use single-shot AF to focus on the incense stick; if you have trouble locking on to the stick, place a white piece of paper behind it. Once you've found focus, switch to manual focus to stop your lens from hunting and carefully recompose so the stick is out of the frame. When you take the first couple of shots, use the LCD monitor to zoom in to your smoke to check it's in focus.



5 FIRING YOUR SHOTS The quickest and easiest way to fire the flash is by pressing the Test/Pilot button during the exposure. You'll either need to fire the camera using a remote release or its self-timer mode, or attach a flash transceiver to the camera's hotshoe and flashgun. Here I've used the Yongnuo YN622N, which works brilliantly. If you find your smoke starts to rise in a straight line, try wafting the smoke or tapping the incense stick to create some movement.



COMMON PROBLEMS – THINGS TO AVOID...



1) FLASH IS VISIBLE: Take care not to position the flash in the shot or to have the flash pointing towards the lens to avoid flare. Move the flash further away and try attaching a lens hood.



2) SMOKE IS TOO STILL: If there's not enough air movement, the smoke trail will rise straight up. If this happens, try moving near the smoke, wafting it or tapping the incense stick.



3) FLASH EXPOSURE: You want a smoke trail that's bright with detail and a strong tonal range, even colour; if the trail is dim, the backlighting isn't strong enough so increase the flash power.



4) EXPOSED BACKGROUND: Keep the flash angled away from the background to avoid any light spilling on to it and giving you an uneven background of grey tones, like you see here.



WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Smoke trails have the potential to look like graphic ink blots when duplicated and inverted.

Exposure: One second at f/9 (ISO 200)

NOW EDIT YOUR OWN!

Turn over the page to find out how to make your trail shot like this...

Make smoke art

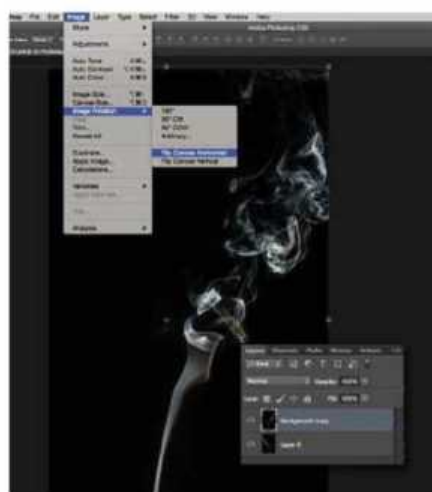
YOU'RE NOT FINISHED YET...CAROLINE SCHMIDT SHOWS YOU HOW TO GIVE YOUR SHOTS INTRIGUE AND VIBRANCE IN JUST A FEW EDITING STEPS

ONCE YOU HAVE your smoke trail images you can really have some fun. In Photoshop you can colour, flip, invert, crop, overlay and even manipulate your trails into shapes. Smoke trails have the potential to look like a psychiatrist's ink blot, which is what we plan to show you how to create here. Out of the few options we'll cover, you can do all the steps or pick one or

two to create your own style of abstract art. Before you begin these more creative steps, however, you need to prepare your shot. This means adjusting the exposure and contrast, if necessary, to make the smoke trail 'pop' without losing valuable detail in the highlights and cropping your image to get rid of any visible smoke source, such as the tip of the incense stick should you get it in frame.



1 EDIT IN ACR Start by opening your image in Adobe Camera Raw and increase the **Clarity** slider to draw out detail by increasing sharpness and contrast. You may also find the image benefits from increasing **Highlights** and the **Whites** slider and decreasing the **Blacks** to manually control contrast.



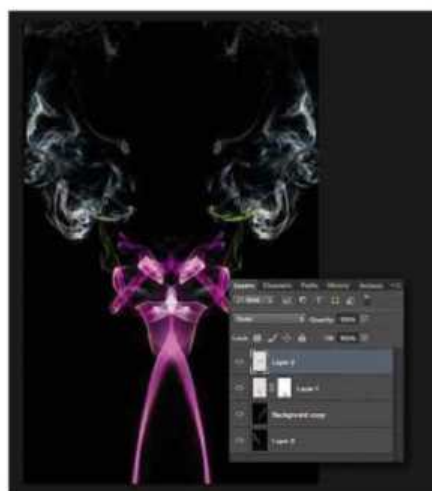
2 FLIP YOUR IMAGE Open your Raw image in Elements or Photoshop, and duplicate the image by dragging the layer down to the **Create a new layer** icon at the bottom of the Layer's palette or going to **Layer>Duplicate Layer**. Now go to **Image>Image Rotation>Flip Canvas Horizontal**.



3 MOVE AND BLEND Click the top layer and set the layer's **Blend Mode** to **Screen** to reveal the bottom image. You'll need to use the **Move Tool** to drag the top layer into place so that both smoke trails overlay each other slightly. You may need to crop the image now that you've changed the shape of the shot.

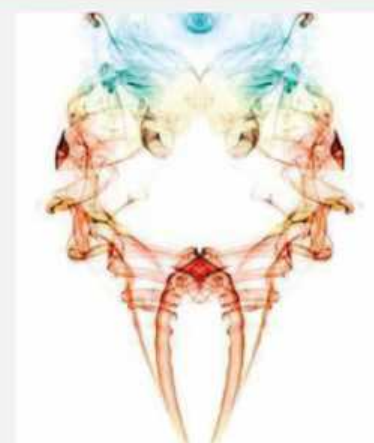


4 ADD COLOUR Create a new layer (**Layer>New**) and use the **Brush Tool** and your chosen colour to 'paint' an area of your smoke trail. Change the layer's **Blend Mode** to **Color** and reduce the layer's **Opacity** to get the desired effect. You can then use the **Erase Tool** to edit the painted area.



5 MULTI-COLOURING You can make colouring your smoke trail as simple or complex as you like. You can continue to add new layers with the **Blend Mode** set to **Color** and use different colours at varying opacities. Don't be afraid to overlap colours as merging them can create a smoother result.

TECHNIQUE TO TRY Invert



If you prefer a white background, all you need to do is go to **Image>Adjustments>Invert** or click **cmd** and **I**. If you plan to colour your trail, invert your shot first unless you want to invert your chosen colour palette too.



FIVE-MINUTE SOLUTION

Colouring a smoke trail couldn't be simpler or quicker. Try it for yourself and you'll be pleasantly surprised.

THE CANON EOS 5D SERIES

Setting the standard for full-frame DSLRs for ten years

WHEN LAUNCHED IN 2005, THE CANON EOS 5D TRANSFORMED THE WORLD OF FULL-FRAME PHOTOGRAPHY. TEN YEARS ON, THE CANON EOS 5D SERIES CONTINUES TO LEAD THE FIELD

THE CANON EOS 5D series recently reached a milestone in digital SLR photography by celebrating its tenth anniversary. The original Canon EOS 5D was released in September 2005 and completely changed the photographic landscape. For the first time, enthusiasts and professionals were able to take advantage of the many benefits of full-frame photography in a camera that was relatively lightweight, compact and, above all, affordable. For the first time, the highest level of image quality was available to the masses and led to the Canon EOS 5D winning countless admirers in the consumer and professional market, as well as numerous awards.

The second generation of this esteemed series appeared in November 2008. The Canon EOS 5D Mark II provided a number of improvements that saw it become another favourite with stills photographers, but this was only one aspect of its success and appeal. The Canon EOS 5D Mark II was the model that facilitated the widespread use of digital SLRs in professional movie-making. Boasting Full HD capture and a wide range of facilities aimed at shooting top quality video, this model was widely adopted by motion picture and television studios, who could take advantage of the camera's facilities and Canon's extensive EF lens range.

March 2012 saw the arrival of the Canon EOS 5D Mark III, which boasted further significant improvements and innovations to its still and video capture capabilities. Since its launch, this model has proven extremely popular with enthusiasts and professionals looking to make the most of its extensive range of features and its incredible performance. The Canon EOS 5D Mark III has been designed to offer everything the photographer could need. It boasts a



Above: The incredible performance of the Canon EOS 5D Mark III has made it a favourite with enthusiasts, professionals and videographers.

“TEN YEARS ON, THE CANON EOS 5D MARK III CONTINUES THE LEGACY STARTED BY THE ORIGINAL EOS 5D IN 2005”

full-frame CMOS sensor with a 22.3-million-pixel resolution, incorporates the powerful 14-bit DIGIC+ processor and offers manual control when shooting Full HD video.

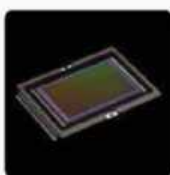
Its ISO range of 100-25,600 is expandable to 102,400, so it can be used in all types of lighting conditions, while its fully weather-sealed body ensures complete protection from the elements. Delve deeper into the

camera's specification and you'll see it's designed to help users develop their skills at capturing all types of subject. The 61-point wide-area autofocus system features 41 cross-type sensors (including five double-cross sensors) to ensure fast and accurate AF on static and moving subjects, which along with its 6fps continuous shooting rate, makes it ideal for capturing sports and wildlife.

KEY INNOVATIONS INSIDE THE CANON EOS 5D MARK III

● CMOS SENSOR

Canon manufactures its own sensors and this expertise allows it to optimise image and video quality. The 22.3-million pixel full-frame CMOS sensor is the same size as a 35mm film frame and boasts a gapless microlens array for enhanced light efficiency, as well as on-chip noise reduction.



● DIGIC+ PROCESSOR

The DIGIC+ processor handles all the information provided by the sensor and other key components and is the same as that used in the flagship Canon EOS-1D X. It is incredibly quick – around 17x faster than the DIGIC 4 found in the EOS 5D Mark II. This allows for a fast shooting rate of 6fps as well as Full HD video.



● AF SENSOR

The autofocus sensor used in the Canon EOS 5D Mark III provides incredible speed and accuracy. Based on the AF system used in the Canon EOS-1D X, it boasts 61 AF points covering a very wide area of the image frame. The comprehensive menu allows users to customise the AF system to suit their style of photography.





Above: The 22.3-million pixel full-frame sensor used in the Canon EOS 5D Mark III captures stunning images packed with detail, colour, low noise and a wide dynamic range.



Videographers the world over have discovered how the Canon EOS 5D Mark III's range of features allows for unparalleled flexibility and performance. Full HD video at 1080p only scratches the surface of the camera's capabilities. Full manual control is possible on video and audio, with a 3.5mm mic socket allowing for the use of external microphones, too.

Ten years on, the Canon EOS 5D Mark III continues the legacy started by the original EOS 5D in 2005, allowing photographers

of all levels the chance to capture incredibly detailed images and video, while taking their photographic skills to new heights.

Finally, it's worth noting that earlier this year, Canon transformed the world of full-frame digital SLR photography yet again with the launch of the EOS 5DS and EOS 5DS R, which boast 50.6-megapixel full-frame CMOS sensors, pushing image resolution even higher.

For further information on the Canon EOS system, visit: www.canon.co.uk

CANON EOS 5D MARK III OFFER



GRAB A GRIP AND GET A £250 REBATE!

Until 13 January 2016, you can claim a rebate of £250 when you purchase a Canon EOS 5D Mk III with a BG-E11 Battery Grip. The addition of a battery grip is perfect when out and about for an extended period as it extends battery life and also gives flexibility in camera handling during shoots.

Purchase of a Canon EOS 5D Mk III and a BG-E11 Battery Grip between 14 October 2015 and 13 January 2016. For full terms and conditions, visit: canon.co.uk/promotions/batterygrip-rebate

Expert Critique

WANT YOUR SHOTS CRITIQUED BY THE *DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY* EXPERTS? TURN TO PAGE 55 TO FIND OUT HOW TO SUBMIT IMAGES



SUNSET LIGHT

by Bruno Chavarria

Nikon D3300 with NIKKOR 50mm f/1.8 lens.
Exposure: 1/500sec at f/1.8 (ISO 100).

What we think: This is what we'd usually describe as an oh-so-close portrait! The light is gorgeous, the location is great and the composition is very strong – it's just the slight mis-focus that's letting it all down sadly. Let's start with the positives: Bruno has shot this portrait at the most photogenic time of day – the warm, low light breaking through the photogenic wooden walkway

and backlighting his subject couldn't be more ideal. Facing his subject away from the light prevents harsh highlights and shadows too – perfect. Bruno has handled the backlighting well – there's signs of some dodging on her face, but this looks reasonably natural. As mentioned, the main negative is that the subject is out of focus – not by much, but at f/1.8 there's no margin for error as depth-of-field falls off so quickly.

Why it works

- ✓ Wonderful golden backlighting
- ✓ Lead-in lines and strong composition
- ✓ Great choice of location

MADDALENA ➔

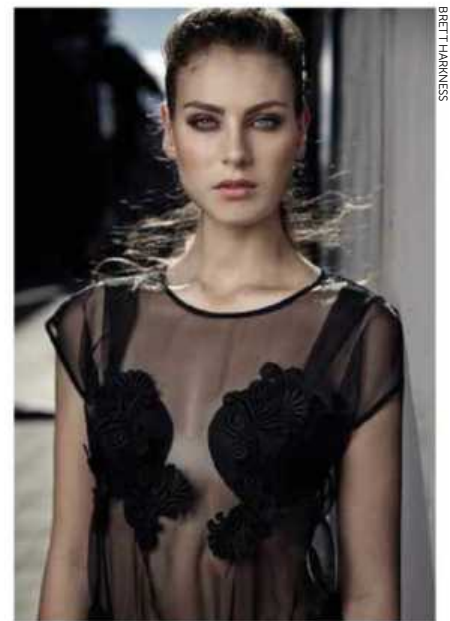
by Daniela Greco

Canon EOS 1100D with Canon EF 50mm f/1.4 USM lens.
Exposure: 1/160sec at f/2.2 (ISO 100).

What we think: The first thing that drew us to Daniela's portrait was the beautiful eye contact in this portrait. The second thing that we noticed was the stylish toning that has been applied – very on-trend. The image is dark, but this adds to the appeal and isn't a negative as the girl's skin is exposed just right, and is the brightest part of the image, as it should be. We're not 100% sold on the crop and pose however. Let's see what portrait pro Brett has to say...

Why it works

- ✓ Mesmerising eye contact
- ✓ Great toning and use of colour
- ✓ Eye is drawn to subject without distraction



BRETT HARKNESS

PORTRAIT EXPERT

Brett Harkness



"I like this shot as it makes you stop and look. I'm a fan of tight crops as they draw attention to the eyes.

The angle of her head is good too.

Daniela has used a 50mm lens – my favourite focal length but one not usually associated with tight crops – yet there's no sign of distortion. Shooting at this angle at f/2.2 can lead to one eye being soft, especially when the subject is turned slightly, so that's something to watch for. The toning is nice and suits the subject's skin tone and feel of the shot. My only major gripe is the post-processing on her eyes – the whites are too white and look overworked, also her lips are very dark and this can look strange."



WAITING FOR THE SUN ➡

by Michal Rosinski

Pentax K-5 with Pentax F Macro 100mm f/2.8 lens.
Exposure: 0.6 seconds at f/11 (ISO 100).

What we think: Wow. This could easily be an alien creature from another planet if we didn't know any better! The detail here is amazing – you can make out individual follicles of hair on the insect's body and legs. Michal's focusing is spot on, his subject is pin-sharp and the background is uniform and diffused, and also free from distractions. We're having trouble finding fault here – this is an excellent macro insect study.



ROSS HODDINOTT

WILDLIFE EXPERT *Ross Hoddinott*



"I think this is a robber fly – it's good to see less popular macro subjects being photographed. Technically, there are lots of positives here. The insect stands out against a diffused backdrop. Despite the shallow depth-of-field, the body and eyes are sharp due to good technique, pin-point focusing and a parallel viewpoint. It's a very good record shot – the type of image that is perfect for illustrative purposes in a book or wildlife magazine. However, from a purely aesthetic viewpoint, it would be great if the fly had been clinging to a more photogenic perch, while the lack of directional light also reduces the impact. Personally, I favour backlighting insects like this, as it highlights fine detail."

HOUSESTEADS CRAG ➡

by Jemma Slater

Canon EOS 6D and a Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L IS USM lens.
Exposure: 1/40sec at f/9 (ISO 100).

What we think: Jemma has used an obvious lead-in line here on Hadrian's Wall to strengthen her composition. The wall guides you in before disappearing away into the distance, drawing your eye into the image. There's a nice bit of interest in the sky – almost as if it's clear one side of the wall and moody the other! However, we'd love to see this scene shot during better light – imagine this moody sky with rays of dappled golden light piercing through and striking the landscape, picking out details on the wall! Finally, we're not crazy on the expanse of green in the foreground. There's nothing there of interest and it slightly lets down an otherwise strong composition.





THE FUTURE ➔

by Susan Spence

Nikon D3200 with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 EX lens.
Exposure: 1/320sec at f/8 (ISO 100).

What we think: We're seeing more and more architecture being submitted for *Expert Critique* – it seems to be a growing genre! We really like this image – Susan has nicely balanced the exposure between the futuristic structure and the sky without losing detail. The strong, directional light further adds to the angular nature of the building and the black & white conversion gives the image an abstract feel. We'd be tempted to straighten up the vertical lines, but otherwise this is a really nice image.

Why it works

- ✓ The black & white conversion is excellent
- ✓ Susan has nailed the exposure
- ✓ Angular building contrasts with clouds

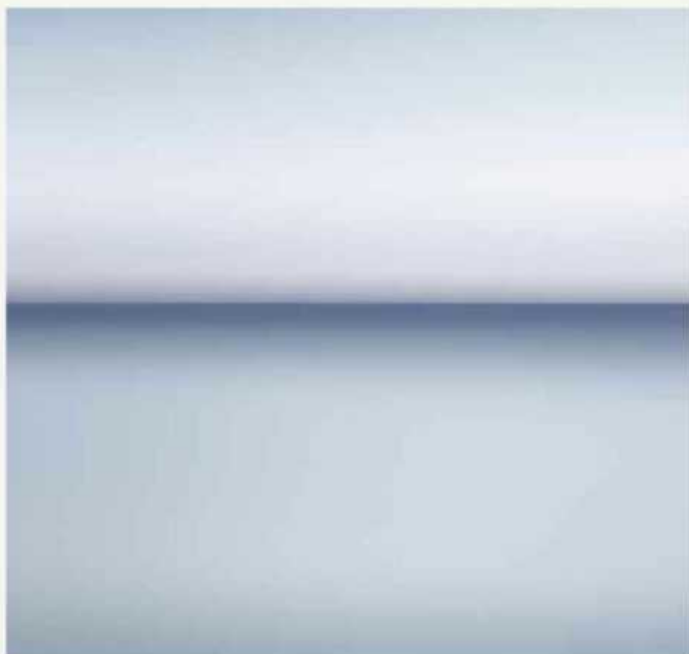




LEE Big Stopper, LEE 0.9 ND Soft Grad
Nikon D3X, Zeiss 50mm Planar, 240 sec @ f/11



LEE Big Stopper
Nikon D3X, Zeiss 50mm Planar, 420 sec @ f/11



LEE Big Stopper, LEE 0.6 ND Soft Grad
Nikon D3X, Zeiss 50mm Planar, 305 sec @ f/13



LEE Big Stopper, LEE 0.6 ND Soft Grad
Nikon D800E, Zeiss 50mm Planar, 302 sec @ f/11

BIG STOPPER

My objective with the project CONTINUUM was to shoot a sequence of simple, elemental photographs, essentially just sea and sky, but all from the same spot on a beach near my home in France. The photographs would be made at different times of the day in different conditions; dawn, dusk, the middle of the day, during storms, sunlight, even snow on one occasion. All would be quite different, but all would link together to form a symbiotic body of work, due mostly to the positioning of the horizon, and the fact that every photograph would be shot using very long exposures.

I chose the LEE Big Stopper to help give me the long shutter speeds I required, and combined this with various LEE ND grad filters to control the light. I am very 'old school' regarding my photography and prefer to 'pre-process' as much as I can rather than rely on software after the event. The adaptability of the LEE Filter system lets me be creative in-camera, which suits me down to the ground.

Jonathan Chritchley
www.jonathanchritchley.net



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HOW TO GET YOUR IMAGES TO US...

EMAIL: If you want to email submissions, send them to: submissions@dslrphotomag.co.uk
Please only email images at a maximum of 1,000 pixels along the longest edge (note: your email will be rejected if the total size of attachments exceeds 8MB). Tell us which article(s) you're submitting to in the subject line and include your name, address and daytime number.

FACEBOOK: Join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/digitalslrphoto. Become a part of the community and post your best shots to our wall. We regularly monitor the page and will be in touch if your work catches our eye!

FLICKR: Visit: www.flickr.com/groups/digitalslrphoto to upload your images to our Flickr group.

POST: Burn your high-res images as JPEGs onto a CD/DVD, including a 'mugshot', and produce a contact sheet with location and technical details. Put it all in an envelope with a covering letter, including the submission form below and post to: *Digital SLR Photography*, PO BOX 1327, Stamford, Lincs PE2 2PT. Enclose an SAE if you'd like them returned.

Digital SLR Photography contact form

Tick a box and fill in your details if you would like to submit images or take part in *Photo Workshop*.



☐ Workshop



☐ Portfolio



☐ Expert Critique



☐ General

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____


Phone: _____

Email: _____

Checklist

- ✓ If submitting images by post, remember to include your 'mugshot' and contact details (name, address, email and daytime number).
- ✓ Please don't send us high-res images by email: resize your shots to 1,000 pixels along the longest edge and if we see something we like, we'll request the high-res file from you!
- ✓ Emails exceeding 8MB total size might not arrive, so split your submission down into two or more emails to ensure they get through.
- ✓ Please don't send us your entire portfolio – as you may appreciate we receive a lot of submissions and aren't able to look through hundreds of images – narrow the selection down and pick your best shots only.

For a full set of picture guidelines, or to ask any questions, please email enquiries@dslrphotomag.co.uk



The **Photo Workshop**

FAMILY PORTRAITS

EACH MONTH WE GIVE ONE READER THE CHANCE TO TEAM UP WITH A LEADING PROFESSIONAL FOR AN EXCLUSIVE ONE-TO-ONE PHOTO WORKSHOP. THIS MONTH, PRO PHOTOGRAPHER KATE HOPEWELL-SMITH AND READER ELIZABETH KEATES WORK THEIR MAGIC PHOTOGRAPHING A FAMILY OF FOUR IN ASTON ROWANT NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE IN OXFORDSHIRE

THE FRANSHAM HOUSEHOLD is buzzing with excitement as we arrive. Cat, Tim, eight-year-old Kitty and Lula, aged six, know what to expect from a portrait session with Kate; she's been their photographer since the girls were little. This time, however, was to be a slightly different from the usual for they are being photographed by *Digital SLR Photography* reader Elizabeth, with only a guiding eye from Kate.

Elizabeth has been photographing people for about a year but she's come on leaps and bounds in that time thanks to her training from established pros. She already has sound knowledge about exposures and using off-camera flash, but while she may know how to light a dance floor at a wedding, does she know how to light on location or find the best natural light? Time will tell.

The first challenge Elizabeth has to tackle isn't even one of our four tasks, but it's essential to conquer in part before we leave the house. She has to start building a rapport with the girls if she is to get the best from them on location, so we begin with a chat about what's to come and allow her to get an idea of their personalities. While the girls are only 18 months apart, the blonde beauties couldn't be more different: Lula is quiet, while Kitty is feisty and has a flare for performing arts, meaning Liz may have to work with each slightly differently.

True to Britain, instead of the predicted clear skies and sunshine, we were handed heavy rain and overcast skies. But, we donned our Wellingtons, jumped into Tim's classic Land Rover and headed to the woodland near Christmas Common hoping for the rain to stop.



THE EXPERT: *Kate Hopewell-Smith*



Award-winning photographer and Nikon Ambassador Kate Hopewell-Smith is one of the UK's leading wedding and portrait photographers and regularly conducts workshops. www.katehopewellsmith.com

Kate's kit: Nikon D4S, NIKKORAF-S 70-200mm f/2.8, 85mm f/1.4, 35mm f/1.4, Speedlight SB-910 flashgun and an Elinchrom Quadra Ranger with reflective umbrellas.

THE PUPIL: *Elizabeth Keates*



Elizabeth has been shooting weddings for coming up to a year and has ambitions to be a full-time professional. She's keen on training and broadening her skill set via professional workshops, but this will be her first time

photographing a family with Kate.

Elizabeth's kit: Nikon D3 and two D800s, NIKKORAF-S 70-200mm f/2.8, 24-70mm f/2.8 and 35mm f/1.4 lenses.

CHALLENGE 1: FLASHLIT FAMILY PORTRAIT

"Liz has a lot to think about. Not only does she have to consider lighting, location and exposure, she has to handle the challenges of working with people and their different personalities, draw the right expressions from them and pose them for appealing pictures. Taking good portraits is no easy task and we're throwing four very different challenges her way on top of all that.

"Before we left for the woods, Tim asked if we could include their classic Land Rover in their family portrait. What a fun and fantastic way to kick off the day; including personal props like this in a family shot can make a portrait really special. However, such a big subject requires us to use flash on location – you could use multiple flashguns, but frankly when working with children you need to be fast and efficient so I brought along my Elinchrom Quadra Ranger with two reflective umbrellas. Liz has been on one of my wedding workshops this year, so I know she knows how to sync flashguns but she's clearly daunted by the prospect of using location flash – though it's arguably so much easier.

"On arrival, Liz and I search the woods around the parking lot for an area with vibrant colour and low-hanging trees. Although the Land Rover will give the family height, we still need to find the right canopy so the scene fills the frame; if the trees are too tall, we'll have to shoot from further back making them too small in the frame. We spot a good area and Tim backs the vehicle down the path. She suggests that we angle the Land Rover under the tree, rather than having it square to the camera, thinking it may make a more dynamic composition. However, as the Land Rover is such a graphic element in the scene you need to make the composition simple so the brain and eye don't fight each other. As a location photographer, you're always working with a full canvas but it's your job to find your right piece to work within, use lenses to find the



right perspective and a composition that gives structure to the scene.

"Most photographers think if it's overcast, they can shoot anywhere but that's simply not the case. You have to find the good light or, in a pinch, use fill-in flash. In some respects we're lucky that it's overcast in the woods as a bright day could be quite restrictive, but once we get the vehicle in place and the family on the bonnet it becomes clear that we're going to have trouble with the down-light; all of them have what I like to call Batman goggles as the light from above causes deep under-eye shadows. A subtle use of flash is going to be essential.

"I ask Liz where she wants to set up the lights and where she wants to stand to take her shots, but she needs a fair amount of guidance on both so we set up two lights a few metres in front and either side of the vehicle. I show her how easy they are to control, but Liz struggles to find the right

ambient exposure for the scene before adjusting the flash. I show her how to use a depth-of-field calculator to figure out the widest aperture she can afford to use at her preferred shooting distance using a 35mm f/1.4 and also with her 70-200mm f/2.8. The difference these two lens options give her is astounding, not to mention the effect on her images. Eventually she starts to get to grips with altering her aperture to find the best exposure for each lens; I remind her that it's the aperture that controls the flash exposure, not her shutter speed, and that we want a very subtle fill-flash effect.

"Once we have the technicalities in place, Liz starts concentrating on posing and expressions but I urge her to move around too and to zoom in for tighter crops; she seems to feel restricted by the flash. Liz is all for trying different poses and suggests placing the parents on the outside of the group but, as time is of the essence, I point



- 1) Liz poses the family on the hood of the Land Rover.
- 2) It didn't take long for Liz to get a cracking sibling shot.
- 3) Kate reviews Liz's first attempts with location flash.
- 4) Keeping the girls on the edge of the doorway meant enough light could reach them both.
- 5) Liz shows the family the images on the LCD screen.



PICTURE PERFECT

By balancing the ambient light with flash, Elizabeth has captured a beautiful image of the family.

Exposure: 1/60sec at f/5 (ISO 320)



out that a triangle pose with the tallest in the middle makes for a stronger composition. From here, she can concentrate on getting the family to interact and connecting the girls with their parents. It takes a lot of energy to keep the attention of kids and Liz is giving it her best, but having mum supply sweets from her pocket between shots is certainly helping.

"Before we move on to the next challenge, we squeeze in a couple of sibling shots sitting in the back of the Land Rover. The lighting stays the same, but this time Elizabeth has to concentrate on posing the girls without mum's sweetie intervention. Normally I quietly speak to the mum to find

out how the siblings get on; if they've recently fallen out, you're not going to get great shots by asking them to put their arms around each other, so you have to find a different tactic. Thankfully, Kitty and Lula get on well, so it only takes a little coaxing from Liz to have them connect in a pose. She does well to interact with them, but still needs to give a lot more energy to keep their attention and she's getting bogged down with the technical side of shooting. With a little bit of help to refine the girls' poses so they're on a similar plane of focus and managing to crack a few laughs, Liz gets her shots and we can move on."

CHALLENGE 1 Pro verdict

"Liz did really well considering she had never used location lighting, other than flashguns, before. She was a little daunted by the task, and struggled to balance the right ambient exposure with the flash, but she managed to tackle the technical challenges and tricky lighting conditions. She has a great persona with people, but once Elizabeth figures out the technical side of a shot she needs to learn to forget about the settings and concentrate on giving the family an abundance of energy, while focusing on their expressions."



CHALLENGE 2: CAPTURE THE ACTION

"We didn't have to go far to find the location for the next challenge and we certainly couldn't do a workshop in autumn without including this classic childhood favourite. The trees are still vibrant but there are enough fallen leaves to capture a great leaf-throwing portrait. Finding the right tree, with the right background in the best light is just as crucial with this technique as finding the right shutter speed that avoids camera shake but doesn't freeze all the movement in the leaves. It's not a shot most photographers can get first time and usually involves an extra helping hand to throw the leaves from above – luckily for us we have many hands ready to help, letting Liz focus on her photography.

"To make a shot like this successful, I explain to Elizabeth how we need to find a low-hanging tree with plenty of colour, but also a darker background like a shaded area or woodland behind. If you throw leaves in front of a tree of the same colour, you're not going to see them. Once we have our tree and get Lula all wrapped up for her close-up, Liz astutely asks if we need to use fill-in flash or if a reflector will do for this shot, not because we don't have enough light for the shutter speed but because the



1) We find a low hanging tree that offers us shade.
2) Lots of hands make light work of creating this shot.
3, 4 & 5) Kate and Liz review the images to make sure the shutter speed is fast enough, that there's enough light in Lula's eyes from the reflector and that there is at least one shot with a lovely expression to complete the challenge.

light on Lula's face is incredibly flat, with almost no light in her eyes. Sometimes I may use fill-in flash with -2EV flash compensation for a very subtle light, but this time I think a reflector will make a huge difference and we've the hands to hold it.

"Once everyone is in place, we start to sort out Elizabeth's camera settings. She's comfortable using manual mode, so starts with 1/200sec at f/4 on her 70-200mm f/2.8 lens. She's about to set continuous focusing as it's an action shot, but actually this would play havoc as the AF system will try to lock-on to the falling leaves. I suggest she keep it to single-point AF and focus on Lula but to set her camera to burst mode – this is where her Nikon D4S is really going to




come in to its own – between Lula blinking a lot due to the bright reflector and the falling leaves, Liz needs to get as many frames as possible to ensure she gets at least one with a decent expression. It takes a few attempts to find the right exposure as 1/200sec overexposes the image, but 1/250sec was perfect and still retained some movement in the leaves. I was really impressed by how fast Liz got her shots, giving her a chance to try different compositions and crops."



CHALLENGE 2 Pro verdict

"Elizabeth did well with this challenge. It's a tough task to find the right shutter speed that eliminates camera shake but doesn't freeze all the leaves. She knew what she had to do and started to get a few decent shots within just a few frames. Next time I'd like to see a few more leaves in the picture and the subject interacting with them more. Good job!"

A full-page portrait of a young girl with blonde hair, smiling and holding a brown autumn leaf. She is wearing a blue knit hat with a pom-pom, a white scarf, and a blue dress. The background is a soft-focus autumn forest with yellow and orange leaves.

“I WAS REALLY IMPRESSED BY HOW FAST LIZ GOT HER SHOTS, GIVING HER A CHANCE TO TRY DIFFERENT COMPOSITIONS AND CROPS”

FALLING FORWARD

A good attempt by Elizabeth to bring all the necessary elements together to make this fun portrait successful.

Exposure: 1/250sec at f/5 (ISO 320)

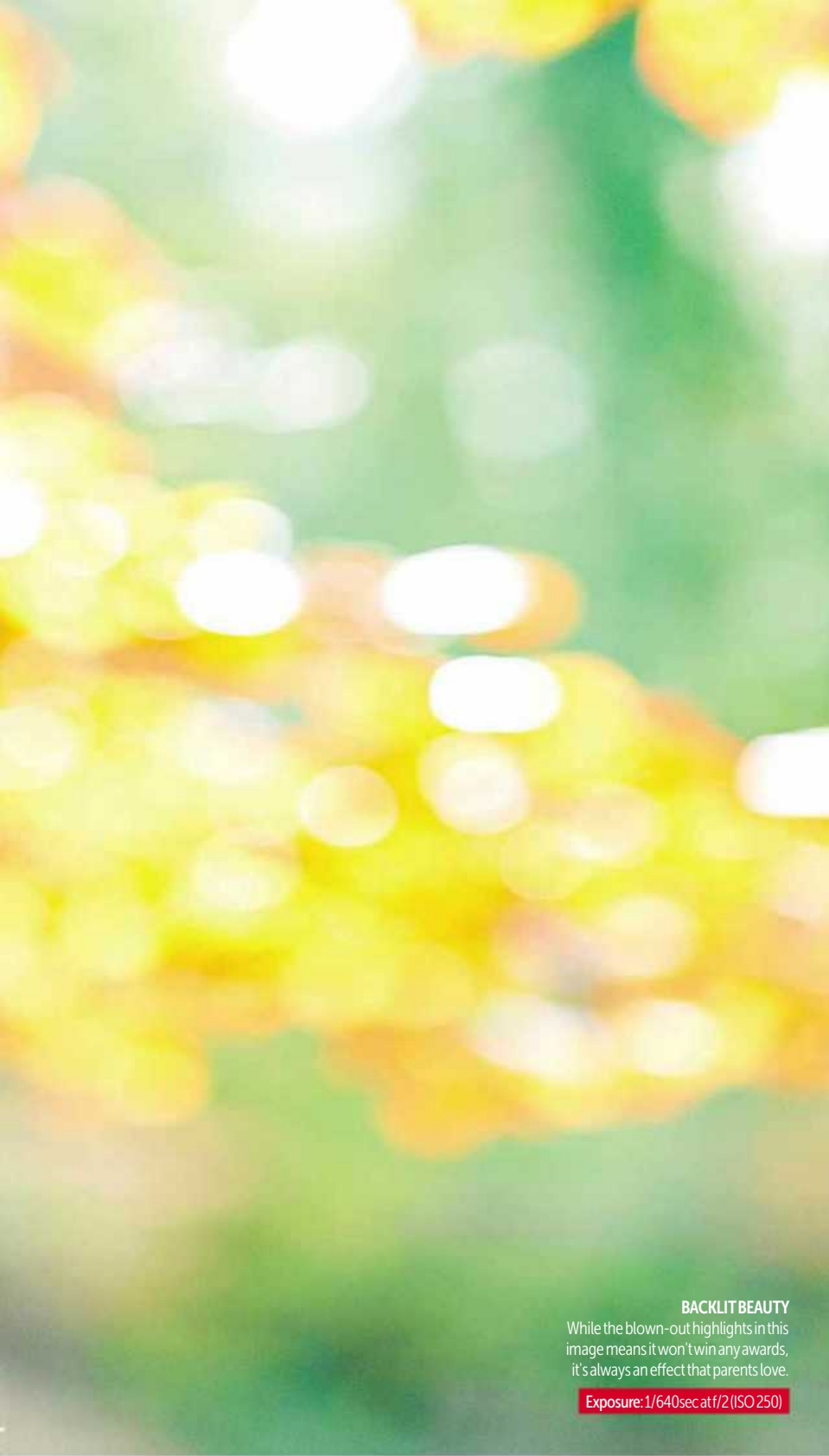


CHALLENGE 3: BACKLIT PORTRAITS

"If possible, it's always nice to get at least a few wide-open backlit portraits in a family shoot, ideally with bokeh in the background. For this we needed to find a spot that had the contrast of direct light passing through leaves – easier said than done on an overcast day. We knew we'd have to wait for a momentary break in the clouds and then work very fast. As backlighting was important, we had no choice but to place Kitty in bad light, and to bounce light back on to her face with a reflector.

"Liz has been using a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens for most of her images up to this point, so I thought we'd shake things up by using an 85mm f/1.4 for a while – and it proves a challenge in itself. There's a bright, beautiful painterly quality to this lens that lends itself well to bokeh portraits, but Liz is working with a shallow plane of focus. To maximise the bokeh Liz sets f/2, which at a frame-filling distance away from Kitty barely gives her 2cm of depth-of-field. As there's not much margin for error, I advise Liz to take as many shots as possible and to use single-point AF. Technique-wise, this is probably the most I've seen Liz struggle all day.

"It's the skin tone that's crucial with a shot like this. As Liz is already set to multi-zone metering from her previous challenge, there's no need for her to change as we'll be exposing for the skin. However, a quick test shot shows that the strong backlighting is still tricking the metering system slightly in to underexposing Kitty's skin. Repositioning the reflector helps, but we take a few more shots to deliberately overexpose the image by two to three stops until the image looks right on the LCD screen. For me, as long as there is no important detail in the highlights, like skin, I don't worry about blowing them out and



BACKLIT BEAUTY

While the blown-out highlights in this image means it won't win any awards, it's always an effect that parents love.

Exposure: 1/640sec at f/2 (ISO 250)



1) Liz positioned Kitty with her back to the sun and took an eye-level viewpoint using a NIKKOR AF-S 85mm f/1.4 lens. 2) A Lastolite sunfire reflector proved useful for this shoot, but with limited light we had to keep changing its position.

losing detail. Elizabeth, however, seems slightly uncomfortable with how overexposed her images are, but I reassure her they will look lovely and angelic once they're edited and the highlights don't matter as long as the skin is well exposed.

"Unfortunately, we only rattle off a few frames before we lose our backlighting, forcing us to move on to the next challenge. Hopefully we'll come across another opportunity to try again later."

“AS BACKLIGHTING WAS IMPORTANT, WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO PLACE KITTY IN BAD LIGHT, TO BOUNCE LIGHT BACK ON TO HER FACE WITH A REFLECTOR”

CHALLENGE 3 *Pro verdict*

"Shooting wide open on a short telephoto lens like the 85mm can produce beautiful results but it can be difficult to achieve the correct focus. It's essential to place the AF point on one eye and shoot a number of frames. It was the first time Liz had tried using an 85mm lens, so she struggled with the focusing and working with such a shallow depth-of-field, but she persevered and I think she got a good shot by the end of our brief challenge."

CHALLENGE 4: SHOOTING IN FULL SUN

"While Liz managed to get one good image from her last challenge, the light disappeared before she was completely happy, so we went in search of a different location in the hope the clouds might part for us again. On a day like today, when the sun makes an appearance it's sporadic and brief, so you have to go looking for the good light – and this is when we came across the perfect shaft of light in the forest for our final challenge. We really didn't think we'd have enough direct light to challenge Liz with shooting in full sun, but we were in luck.

"It's nice to get a few shots of a child/children with each parent during a family shoot, so for this one we photographed Kitty and then brought in Cat. The shaft of light that was coming through the canopy at an angle was falling on a tree, so we asked Kitty to lean against it and to tilt her head up to look towards the light. I love capturing high-contrast shots like Liz is going to try, you can only do it using autumn and winter light; the sun is too strong during the summer, especially for people with blue eyes like Kitty and Cat. I tell Liz that the key is to expose for the highlights – the shadows will look really dark, but can be pulled back in Raw editing, but what's really important is to not lose any detail in the skin.

"I'm what I call an AV/manual photographer: while I shoot in manual I nearly always set my aperture first. Liz used to use aperture-priority mode but found it difficult to get the drama she wanted so found she was constantly using exposure compensation. I suggest she switch to using manual instead even though it's daunting. She's picked it up quickly and it really paid off for this challenge, which certainly tested her exposure skills. If she was to be working in aperture-priority mode, she'd be constantly adjusting her exposure compensation for this type of shot to adapt to the constantly changing light. She starts with f/3.5 at 1/2500sec but by the end, she's shooting at



- 1) Cat and Kitty needed to connect more by standing next to each other and holding hands.
2) Liz checks her settings to keep on top of the changing light.
3 & 4) A few shots of Kitty alone not only make use of the direct sunlight but Liz manages to include a little background bokeh too by finding an angle that captured light through the trees.

f/6.3 at 1/80sec – it was tricky, but she did really well trying to stay on top of the light. They could potentially look great converted to black & white, too!

"Throughout this workshop, I've been reminding Liz to look at the subject's expressions, not to forget to check how and where they connect, and to ensure they interact – be it with the camera through her, or with each other for beautiful candids. When there's so much to think about, it's easy to forget these little details that can ruin a technically perfect portrait. Liz did well, but there's much room for improvement too – for instance noting when a subject's mouth needs to relax, where their hands are and if their poses look 'posed' – it all goes towards taking memorable and authentic family portraits. And Liz is certainly on her way with a capable skill set."



CHALLENGE 4 Pro verdict

"I was impressed by how quickly and efficiently Liz was adapting her shooting to the changing light; she did well exposing for the highlights and stayed on top of the light, adjusting her exposure accordingly. Considering the expanse of skills and challenging light we were dealing with, I think Liz did exceptionally well and I hope I'm leaving her with ways to progress her work."

WORKSHOP SUMMARY: Elizabeth Keates



"What an incredible day! Kate Hopewell-Smith is truly inspiring, deliciously supportive and a fantastic tutor. Within two minutes I had learnt about clearing and simplifying the canvas before me. Within four minutes I was using Elinchrom Quadra Rangers, which gave me such an ease and freedom in which to work, as well as providing the most beautiful light over the family portrait. Three hours dashed by filled with discussions on shutter speeds, ambient exposure and most excitingly Kate's way of pushing the dynamic range of the camera to create powerful, dramatic portraits using only natural light. I have been left with a world of inspiration to throw at my upcoming work."



“I LOVE CAPTURING
HIGH-CONTRAST
SHOTS LIKE LIZ IS GOING
TO TRY, YOU CAN ONLY
DO IT USING AUTUMN
AND WINTER LIGHT”



FLY INTO THE SUN

With Kate's help, Liz manages to put her camera's dynamic range through its paces to capture dramatic portraits.

Exposure: 1/1000sec at f/6.3 (ISO 800)



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IMAGE: TATYANA TOMSICKOVA



IN ASSOCIATION WITH





AUREL FISCHER

1 Crystalised close-ups

It's been a few years since we've been blessed with a white Christmas, but maybe 2015 is the year to break the trend. And, if not, you can keep this technique handy for when the white stuff does make an appearance, most likely early in the new year.

It's often impossible to see the minuscule details of ice crystals with the naked eye, which is why photographing them requires specialist kit. This particular shot was taken using a macro lens and bellows to get close enough to the snowflake that it can be captured with extreme magnification. You can get high magnifications with dedicated

macro lenses, such as a NIKKOR 200mm f/4 Micro lens, but you may need more than a 1:1 reproduction ratio. An affordable option is to buy auto extension tubes and try this with your 50mm lens, or, if you're happy to shoot in manual, pick up an old set of used bellows from eBay. Lighting can be tricky as you're so close to your subject, and you'll need to use a small aperture for depth-of-field, so consider backlighting the ice crystals (as they have been here) – you could use a lightbox or place them on a piece of acrylic glass lit underneath with a bright LED lamp. You'll have to work fast though: the heat of the light is likely to melt the subjects quickly.



ROSS HODDINOTT

3 Reliant robin

Robins are a photographer's favourite, with this time of year being a particularly popular time to photograph them, especially if it has been snowing. The good news is there are millions of robins in the UK and gardens are a popular feeding zone, so you shouldn't have to stray far to find them. Set up a feeding station with fat balls or mealworms and you'll entice them to visit regularly. Their small size means you'll need a powerful telezoom to fill a good portion of your frame. A telezoom like a 70-300mm is good, but better still is a more powerful zoom, such as the NIKKOR AF-S 80-400mm f/4.5-6.3. A feeding station will allow you to coax the robins to a particular area of your garden that is well lit and free of distractions. Shoot from a window, shed or hide and avoid noise or sudden movements. If handholding, set a high ISO (start with ISO 400) and switch on your lens's stabilisation mode if it has it. Better still, mount your camera on a tripod. If it has snowed, bait the ground and capture the robin against a white backdrop, or hang fat balls above a thick branch on which the robin can perch.

2 Focus on decorations

If you've made a real effort to put up lots of colourful decorations and twinkling lights, it makes complete sense that you should capture some decent still-life images. You could set up something, but we'd suggest zooming your standard zoom to its tele-end, or fitting a macro lens, and testing your creative eye to isolate smaller details. Setting a wide aperture, such as f/5.6 or faster, lets you to maintain a high enough shutter speed to avoid shake (stabilisation helps here too) but better still, allows you to maximise bokeh in your images. By including fairy lights or reflective decorations in the background and using a very shallow depth-of-field, you'll be able to highlight attractive decorations in the foreground and add a special glitz to the blurred backdrop, too.



SHUTTERSTOCK

4

Let there be light!

Fairy lights have many functions over the festive period, not least to be a key light for your little people's portraits. If they'll let you, try wrapping them loosely with battery-powered lights (never leave them alone though and ensure they don't get hot – LED lights are best). You could put them in a box for them to gaze into or have them hold the lights in their hands.

Turn off or dim room lights and you'll have them entertained long enough to fire off a few frames. It's a tricky shot to get as children tend to move and you'll be working in low light, so maximise your shutter speed by using a wide aperture and a high ISO. If your camera's AF struggles, switch the lens to M and focus manually.

DANI MANTIS



TATIANA TOMSKICHOVA

5 Like kids at Christmas

Christmas magic may be spontaneous at the time of opening presents but at any other time when children are concerned, you may need to give it a helping hand. It's unlikely that lighting, smiles and your festive scene will come together on its own for your perfect Christmas portrait, so take control and place your subjects where you want them. Giving the children somewhere to sit can help, like on a windowsill, and this lets you also frame them through the window and capture your living room scene behind. For the best results, shoot at night when the glow of the Christmas lights fill the room with atmosphere and shoot wide open (eg f/2) for beautiful bokeh. A fast lens, like the NIKKOR 35mm or 50mm f/1.8 is ideal. You may need a high ISO or to ask your subjects to sit really still as you use a tripod and a slow shutter speed. Giving them something to play with helps keep them occupied, as can someone standing next to you pulling funny faces.

WIRAGE GOURMAND



6 Tasty treats

There's no shortage of delicious food this time of year, making it the perfect time to create some special still-life shots. The delectable Marks & Spencer adverts make food photography look easy, but anyone who's tried it will tell you the tiniest of details, fails in composition or lighting make a huge difference. For instance, with this shot, in order to retain the foamy texture of the hot chocolate, everything had to be set up perfectly so it could be brought in straight from the stove. Window light is a good option, but you'll still need to shape it using flags and reflectors for the best results. When composing your set-up, consider the trimmings, like walnuts, red ribbon and candy canes, but also how you can give depth to your picture using focusing and composition.



JEREMY WALKER

7 Make the most of the light

NIKON AMBASSADOR JEREMY WALKER PROVIDES A FESTIVE GEM TO LANDSCAPE LIGHT

"Landscape photographers looking for the best light often use the early morning or late afternoon light in the spring and summer; but in winter, the sun is low in the sky all day and the shooting window is much greater. Look to use side-lighting to bring out texture, shape and form or try shooting into the light to get the highlights and sparkle from fresh snow and ice crystals. Having your subject, such as icicles or on a grander scale trees coated with snow or frost, backlit can provide striking shots, especially if silhouetted with dark shadows in the foreground. If you are shooting into the light, try and hide the sun behind part of your subject – a tree, a branch or part of a building – so that it does not flare or overexpose."

Focus on pets

We love dressing up our favourite companions for Christmas! Come December the 25th, Instagram and Facebook will be full of floppy-eared pooches and less-than-amused cats in Christmas hats – so if we're going to do it, let's do it properly. You could set up a studio armed with treats or try a more homely portrait, like this one. Studioflash or off-camera flash diffused by a softbox or brolly gives more control over lighting and means you can use a fast shutter speed. If you want to be even more creative, try making a DIY bokeh lens filter out of black paper and place it over your lens to change the shape of fairy lights in the background.

IAN KREIDICH





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9 *Winter wonderland*

**NIKON AMBASSADOR JEREMY WALKER OFFERS
ADVICE ON SHOOTING WINTER LANDSCAPES**

"A landscape following a heavy snowfall offers incredible photo potential, so be ready to take full advantage. Watch the weather forecast and be prepared. Pack your camera bag the night before, make sure your battery is fully charged and carry a spare. Keep your tripod by the back door so that you don't forget it. Take along a flask of hot drink, high-energy snack bars and a spare warm item of clothing. Carry a head torch and a whistle in case you get into trouble. Dress appropriately for the conditions and keep warm. If you are cold you will not be concentrating on the image or the light and will want to give up and head home early.

"In terms of camera kit, travel as light as possible. A standard zoom covers the main wide-angle focal lengths – my personal choice is the NIKKOR AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8. A telezoom is a good call too, as is a macro lens – I use a NIKKOR AF-S 105mm f/2.8 Micro lens for details and 'micro landscapes'.

"Carry a leather chamois cloth to wrap around the camera and lens to protect them

from falling snow and moisture or even your own breath from hitting the camera and freezing. Even a simple baseball cap perched on top of the camera and lens will help protect them. To help prevent your tripod legs from sinking into soft snow, use snowshoes for tripods or specialist discs designed for tripods in the snow.

"The colour of light in winter can be very deceptive. It is far too easy to look at a snow-covered scene under a clear, crisp blue sky and think how great conditions are. While these shooting conditions are good, the camera will see and record blue shadows whereas the human eye is seeing white snow. Be aware of what the blue sky is doing to the snow and compensate by altering the White Balance. Auto White Balance will do a good job but for absolute control, alter the White Balance manually and increase the Kelvin number towards 10000K. Shoot in Raw and you can make further adjustments in post-production. Lots of snow can fool metering systems so check the histogram and either take a spot-meter reading from a mid-tone or use multi-zone metering with positive exposure compensation."

10 *Paint your tree!*

Don't worry, we're not recommending you open a can of Dulux and splash some magnolia over your tree, rather we're suggesting you try your hand at painting with light. The technique is relatively simple: dim/switch off the room lights, set a long exposure, then trip the shutter and, with a small LED torch in hand, circle the tree or follow its outline, all the time having the torch facing the camera. Avoid being recorded in the image by wearing black or dark clothes and keep moving. The result is your tree lit by its fairy lights and magical light trails around it. You could even try placing flash gels in front of the torch to create colour trails. An alternative is to set up your tree on a movable base (eg a dolly) and during a long exposure, slowly rotate it – the result will be a tree that appears to be spinning! With both methods, use your camera in manual mode, set an aperture of f/8 and ISO 400. Start with an exposure of 30 seconds, check results and adjust times accordingly.



JEREMY WALKER



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11 Moody Xmas portrait

There's nothing wrong with fun Christmas portraits that have us donning Santa hats and reindeer ears, but how about shooting something moodier? When we picture Christmas at home with the family, we'll often visualise a scene filled with warmth, so set up a shot that captures the atmosphere of a cozy Christmas. If you have an open fire, you'll find it gives off very warm light, but for most of us, the warmth can be achieved by shooting under tungsten room lights with the White Balance set to

AWB. Don't go for anything posed – candid images work better – have parents sat with children opening presents, kids playing with toys or a couple cuddled and canoodling. Place fairy lights in the foreground or background so as to give sparkling bokeh and light some candles for further ambience. If you're showing the family looking at a present, pop an iPad in an empty box with the screen brightness turned up to bathe their faces in a white glow. Finally, shoot in Raw and you can tweak the colour temperature in post-production.



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12 Winter portrait

Woolly hats, scarves and fur hoods make great features for a frame-filling outdoor portrait. Pick a lens that gives a flattering perspective, a prime like the NIKKOR AF-S 50mm f/1.8G or a telezoom like the NIKKOR AF-S 55-200mm f/4-5.6G VR II are suitable options. Ideally a fast lens with a maximum aperture of f/2.8 or wider will give an appealing fall-off in focus but you can still get decent pictures with a standard zoom at f/5.6. Use single-point AF and focus on the subject's eyes. Take a look around the edges of the frame to ensure you're not over-cropping features like hoods, heads or hats.

Hats and hoods can place your subject's face in shade, so shoot with your back to the sun or use a reflector to bounce light on to their face. If it's snowing or raining, place them with their back to street lights or Christmas lights for a bokeh-filled background, or consider positioning an off-camera flash behind them. If you're working with mixed lighting, it might be best to convert to black & white. Alternatively, if they're not wearing anything on their head, you could wait until the light is low in the sky to feature warm backlighting and some atmospheric flare. Finish with a cool tint in post-production to add to the winter feel.

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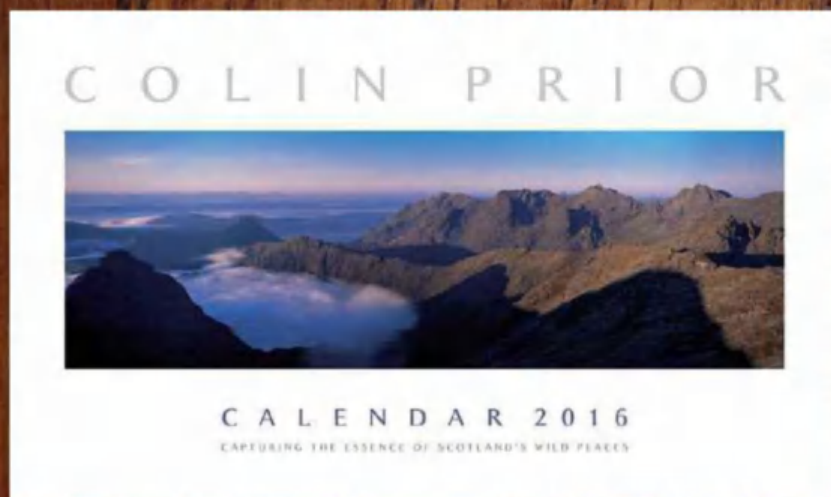
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Featuring: Lavazza / Joe Cornish / Colin Prior / Aurum Light



BACKSTAGE: LAVAZZA CALENDAR 2016 - JOEY L IN LATIN AMERICA

LAVAZZA 2016: FROM FATHER TO SON

PHOTOGRAPHER JOEY L TEAMS UP WITH THE WORLD'S PREMIUM COFFEE BRAND TO CREATE A PHOTO CALENDAR WITH AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE BEHIND IT

SINCE 1993, THE annual arrival of premium coffee brand Lavazza's photographic calendar is eagerly anticipated by many in the photographic world, and certainly here in the *Digital SLR Photography* offices! Having previously enlisted the expert skills of such photographic greats as Helmut Newton, David LaChapelle, Ellen von Unwerth, Eugenio Recuenco, Annie Leibovitz, Mark Seliger, Martin Schoeller and last year Steve McCurry, to name but a few, there are certainly big boots to fill if you're selected as their annual choice. The daunting task of photographing the 2016 Lavazza calendar was in good hands however with talented young Brooklyn-based Canadian photographer Joey L being drafted in to shoot a continuation of last year's theme: *Earth Defenders*. Having worked with Lavazza on major advertising campaigns in the past, and being versed in photographing different people and diverse cultures all over the world, Joey L was the perfect fit for this ethically-focused project.

As well as adorning walls around the world, the aim of this year's Lavazza calendar is to educate people as to the origins of many of the products that we take for granted. For instance coffee, and also to highlight the relationship between people and the land, telling the story behind the creation and cultivation of food and drink through the faces of those directly involved in the



process. Furthermore, proceeds from the 2016 calendar are put towards Terra Madre Giovani – We Feed the Planet, an event that aims to bring small-scale food producers from around the world together to spread knowledge and understanding.

Shot over the course of 30 days, this year's project was entitled *From Father to Son*, and focuses on the relationship between parents and their children, and the passing on of teachings, methods and skills. "When I first read the brief I thought it was an excellent concept," said Joey of Lavazza's idea. "I'm lucky that when I grew up I had parents that supported me as a photographer, so I took a lot of things that I learnt from my father into what I do today. I would say that the concept really resonated with me. I think it's important because you can develop technique and skills which help you one day, but if those skills aren't passed on and improved upon in the next generation, they get lost with time."

The journey took Joey and his team across





JOEVL



JOEVL



JOEVL



JOEY L



BACKSTAGE LAVAZZA CALENDAR 2016 - JOEY LIN LATIN AMERICA

“MY PHOTOGRAPHIC VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY TO SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA HAS SHOWN ME THAT THE VALUE OF A PLACE LIES IN THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE WORKED THERE FOR GENERATIONS”

South America, from Brazil to Mexico, Colombia, Peru and on to the Dominican Republic to document the harvesting process through the faces of the people responsible for producing it at a grass-roots level. Shooting with a Phase One 645DF medium-format digital body, Joey was given the artistic freedom to stamp his signature high-end style of lighting and portraiture on the project and, through his ability to connect with his subjects, he captured some truly stunning and heartfelt portraits. “The word I like to use to describe a project like this is ‘Honourburden,’” says Joey, when speaking about the project. “The reason for that is because, of course, it’s an honour to be here – I’m very fortunate to be among such incredible subjects and incredible crew. But it is also a burden because you take on the responsibility of representing these people in the correct way.”

The result is a visually stunning collection of images that wouldn’t look out of place in a gallery, or glossy photo book, let alone a

calendar. The images speak volumes about the world behind the food that we eat every day. Joey sums it up best: “My photographic voyage of discovery to South & Central America has shown me that the value of a place lies in the people who have worked there for generations. My hope is that every image manages to communicate, at least in part, the emotions and experiences of these contemporary heroes, these fathers and sons, whose faces and gestures tell the story of a distant past and the dream of a better future.”

All of the images from the *From Father To Son* Lavazza calendar can be viewed online at calendar.lavazza.com/en/. To find out more about Joey L’s work, visit: www.joeyl.com

HOW TO ORDER...

From Father to Son, the Lavazza 2016 calendar shot by Joey L, costs 30€. Order at: store.slowfood.it/vetrina/calendario-lavazza-2016-568.html



JOEY L





JOEVL



JOEVL



JOEVL

NORTHERN LIGHT



JOE CORNISH IS ONE OF THE UK'S FINEST LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHERS. WE SPOKE TO JOE, AS WELL AS ADAM RICHARDSON FROM THE JOE CORNISH GALLERY, ABOUT THE *NORTHERN LIGHT* 2016 CALENDAR

Q For how many years have you produced the Northern Light calendar?

AR: The first Joe Cornish calendar was created for 1999 and there has been one every year since then. Those familiar with Joe's work will not be surprised to learn that an image of the distinctive Roseberry Topping featured on the first ever cover.

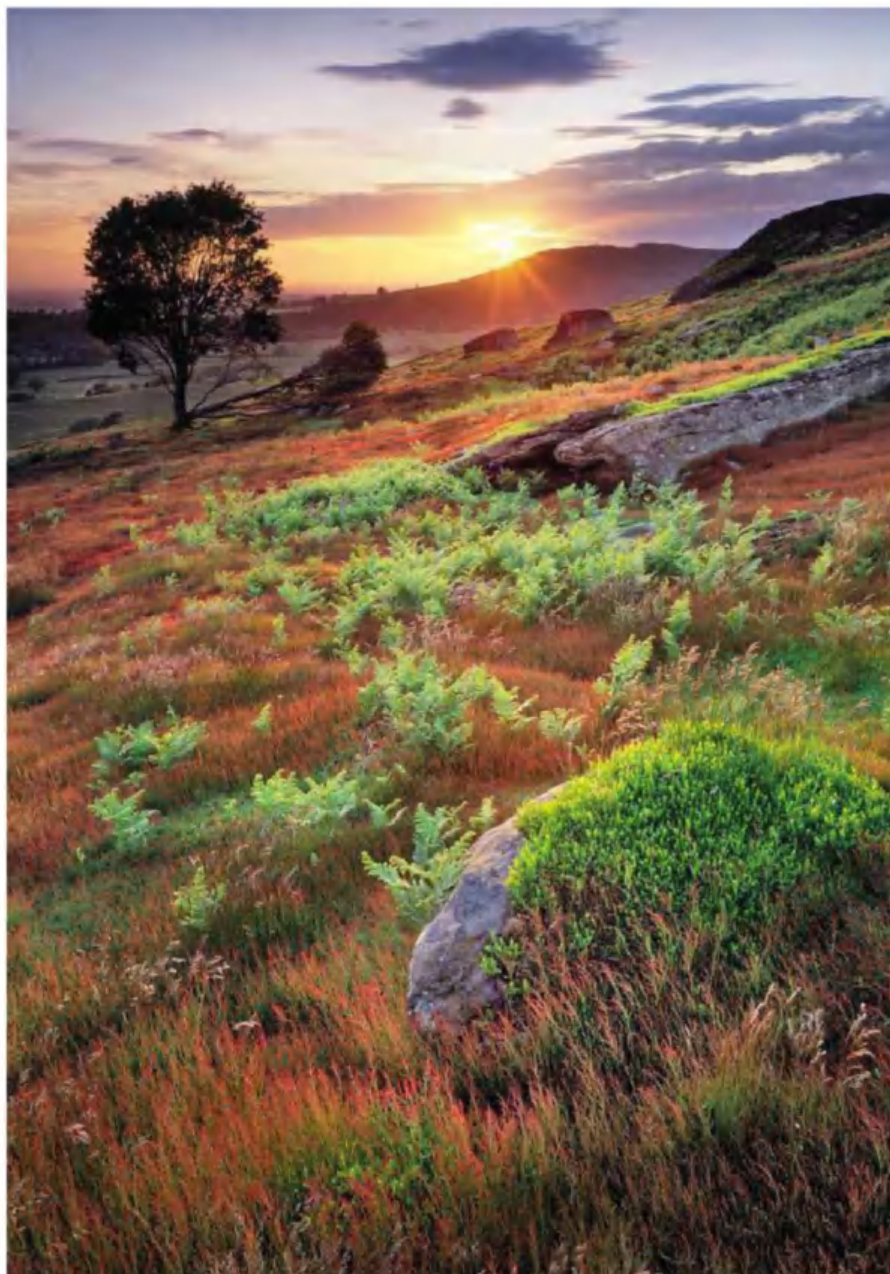
Q What originally made you decide to produce the calendars?

AR: When we began producing greeting cards with Joe's images, it soon became apparent that some of the best images were not being used. This was because they either didn't make for a good card subject, or that they were the wrong aspect ratio. A calendar gave us an additional format through which we could ensure we showcased all of Joe's personal choice of images.

Q What considerations did you make towards the calendar format and its production values?

AR: Since 2000, we have always used an approximately 5x4 ratio for *Northern Light*, our flagship calendar. Occasionally we may include slightly cropped images, depending on the camera that Joe has used to capture the included shots.

Our paramount concern is the quality of the production. We insist on using higher quality paper than that usually used for calendars, with all the images being painstakingly prepared by Joe. It is literally a case of standing over the printer as it is on the press and making colour corrections if necessary. It's important that we always print







in the UK, using printers that we know and trust. Currently this is Johnson's of Nantwich and it is a great help that their MD, John Macmillan, is himself a fine photographer.

Q How easy was it selecting the 12 images used in the calendar?

AR: Selecting which images to use can take some time. In fact, it was probably easier when Joe was still using film! We usually choose a shortlist and then ask colleagues and friends for their input. The initial impact of the calendar is a very important factor and so it is a useful exercise to gauge the reactions of our opinion panel.

The images selected were usually taken the previous year but this is dependent on Joe's travelling and whether it snowed that year! Some images, such as those containing moorland heather, bluebells or snow, will naturally be season- or month-specific, others will be less so. This is particularly the case with seascapes, meaning these can be used more freely.

Q There is an incredible range of equipment used, from Fuji and Sony CSCs to an Ebony large-format film camera. Does Joe pack them all in his kit bag?

AR: No, Joe doesn't take them all with him on shoots. The massive improvement in digital cameras means that he can now often take smaller, lighter cameras with him. The type of shoot and also the location ultimately has a bearing on which camera he uses.

Q Why do you focus your calendars on the UK rather than worldwide locations?

AR: The bottom line is that the calendars sell best in the UK! Our customers love seeing their country depicted so well and we know many of them buy the calendars to send

“LIKE ANY LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER, I THRIVE ON THE CHANGES OF THE SEASON THAT COME WITH LIVING IN THE BRITISH ISLES”

abroad to ex-pat friends and relatives.

They are a great reminder of the fantastic landscapes we have here in the UK.

Q What makes the UK's landscapes, in your view, the world's best?

JC: There is an assumption that I must constantly travel abroad to far-off places. The truth is rather different. Typically twice a year I make a point of seeing some wilderness if I can. But mostly I am in Britain and enjoying the landscape close to home, mainly because I know it so well. Yes, travel broadens the mind, but perhaps best of all it lends perspective to our own home environment and deepens our appreciation for the landscape in our backyard.

Like any landscape photographer, I thrive on the changes of the season that come with living in the British Isles. Our elusive and restless weather and the dramatically differing lengths of the day as we move from midsummer to midwinter then back again mean that no day is quite like any other.

Q Have you any favourite locations, types of location and times of year?

JC: I am always drawn back to the area where I have lived for the last twenty years, at the foot of the North York Moors, near Teesside. The landscape around Roseberry Topping is my local patch, my backyard, my natural



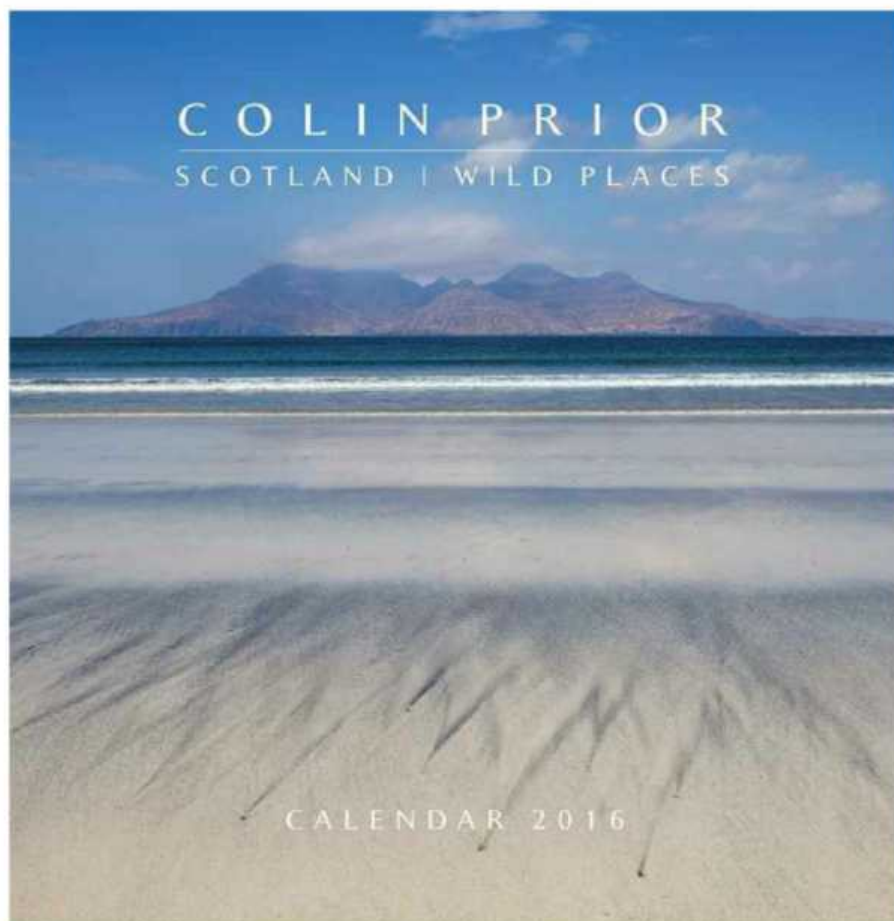
habitat. The profound seasonal changes of Britain's climate are perfectly reflected here.

As for time of the year, I spend more time photographing landscapes in the winter than in any other season. The light in winter always seems more magical than at other times of year, and as sunrise is comfortably timed I tend to be up for dawn in the winter more than other times of the year. That means being witness to some truly remarkable conditions of weather and light. I'm really quite blessed to be where I live.

HOW TO ORDER...

The *Northern Light* 2016 wall calendar (£16.50) and multi-purpose calendar (£9) can be ordered at: www.joecornishgallery.co.uk





SCOTLAND'S FINEST



PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER COLIN PRIOR HAS BEEN PRODUCING HIS OWN RANGE OF CALENDARS FOR 17 YEARS. WE CAUGHT UP WITH HIM ABOUT WHAT HE HAS IN STORE FOR 2016

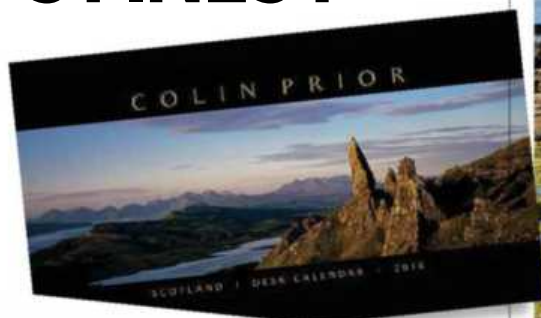
Q What made you decide to produce your own range of calendars?

There was a clear demand for my images – a number of established publishers had already produced my calendars and they sold extremely well.

Q How did you decide on the formats to use?

I was shooting with a Fuji GX-617 panoramic camera at the time, which meant that I had to design a bespoke template. It was initially met with resistance by retailers as they don't particularly like oversized calendars as they take up too much space, but I persevered and the public bought into it. Gradually it was accepted to the degree that at one point there were five other photographers who had copied the design. The *Wild Places* calendar is shot with a high-end Canon EOS DSLR and so is a more traditional template.

Q What is your selection process for choosing images for the calendars?
Editing a calendar requires both a variety of



locations and a good seasonal spread that accurately reflects the conditions, colours and light found at specific times of the year.

Q You've focused on Scotland rather than worldwide locations. Why is that?

I published a *World's Wild Places* calendar for eight years but fundamentally ran out of new images. Historically, worldwide calendars have never been a big hit as they lack the connection for people to buy.







Scotland, by comparison, has far greater connections with the majority of the British public, so these calendars always sell well.

Q What makes Scotland's landscapes, in your view, so photogenic?

The Scottish landscape benefits from three special qualities. The first is the prevailing moist westerly winds, which are responsible for the diverse palette of colours we find in Scotland throughout the year. Then there are the variety of geological features: for such a small country, Scotland has a rich geological history, which is responsible for the landforms we know today. Finally, Scotland's northerly latitude greatly contributes to the quality of light that is often found here.

Q Have you any favourite locations to shoot in Scotland?

Over the years I have built up a portfolio of locations that I visit at specific times of the year. These might be exclusively locations that I'll visit in the autumn for tree colour, or mountain locations when there's a dusting of fresh snow. It's all about knowing where and when to go and this knowledge is accumulated over many years of observation.

Q What are the biggest challenges to shooting Scotland's wild places?

The same as they've always been – time and money. To create a body of work with depth demands a huge investment of time and money. The reconnaissance to find new locations and the subsequent return to shoot the actual images require a big commitment with no guarantees. As the returns from photography have diminished, professional photographers increasingly have neither the time nor money to pursue their own passion,



“IT'S ALL ABOUT KNOWING WHERE AND WHEN TO GO AND THIS KNOWLEDGE IS ACCUMULATED OVER MANY YEARS OF OBSERVATION”

and this is having a negative effect on the amount of new work now being created. It's ironic at a time when photography has never been so popular, that there is little authoritative work being created out there and this is simply being driven by economics – the mechanisms that once empowered photographers to go out and do what they were good at are no longer relevant and the result is that creativity has been stunted. When we look back at the mid-eighties for instance, we see that *National Geographic* would spend \$200,000 on a big assignment



and we clearly saw the results of that investment. The photographers would head off into the remotest parts of the planet knowing that all their standing orders were being taken care of and that they could go and pursue their passion. Soon the white noise of daily life would quickly fall away and they would begin to connect with their subject, in the knowledge that their work would be published in one of the most well-produced and well-distributed magazine on the planet, so it drove excellence. That investment in photography is long over and will never again return.

HOW TO ORDER...

Scotland – The Wild Places (£10.50) and the *Scotland Panoramic Desk and Wall* (£9.45 / £12.50) calendars are available at: colinprior.co.uk





FALLEN ANGELS



AWARD-WINNING COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHER JAROSLAV WIECZORKIEWICZ CREATES MARVELLOUS PORTRAITS WITH MILK. WE FIND OUT WHY 2016

WILL BE THE YEAR OF HIS MOST EXTRAORDINARY CALENDAR TO DATE

Q Over the last three years, you've created a series of MILK Calendars: *Milky PinUps 2014*, *Splash Heroes 2015* and *Fallen Angels 2016*. On a basic level, the shoots involve throwing milk over models and sculpting it into shape using studioflash and post-production. What motivates you to create these photography calendars each year?

I love to work on these photo calendars because it frees my mind and gives me so much creative freedom. Everyone that works in a commercial environment understands that it is a completely different game. You are hired to do a specific assignment. There is a budget and a whole lot of people that manage the brief and production. Like in life there are many rules, should-do, can-do or do-nots... when you have that precious time to work on personal projects there is absolutely nothing that you shouldn't try and that should stop you.

Q How did the concept for *Fallen Angels 2016* come about?

The idea for the *Fallen Angels 2016* calendar came about four years ago when my mother was battling breast cancer. It was a time when you have to evaluate your actions and goals. The image I had in my mind brought about a series of images of people that are, or



were, special and inspired me, but specifically those that due to their look, actions or lifestyle were pushed outside of the margins of acknowledged standards of beauty or for what's deemed 'normal' by society. For instance, an amputee and a woman who has had a mastectomy are among the models photographed.

Q How was *Fallen Angels* an evolution from your previous MILK Calendars, *Milky PinUps* and *Splash Heroes*?

I work on a few different series at the same time. For example I have a few illustrations ready for the 2017 calendar and these were done a couple of years ago. It is more about keeping the momentum of a project going rather than continuously trying to outdo



yourself. However, for this series I did throw the milk on my models' faces – something that I have tried only a few times before. Trivial as it sounds, the approach came about after watching the movie *Snow White and the Huntsman* and seeing Charlize Theron's visually great scene in the milk bath!

Q How important is storyboarding to the creation of your calendars?

Storyboarding is crucial to my whole thought process. It takes us a whole year to work on such a project and I need to make sure that our work is consistent from shoot to shoot and everyone in the team is well briefed – starting with our models. They cannot see the final look, not even after the shoot, but my sketches can communicate the design in





the clearest possible way. I like to make sure that everyone is on the same page at every stage of the project.

Q What image are you most proud of in *Fallen Angels* and why?

The one that I made for my mother. It's the first one that came straight from my heart and that we based the whole series on. I knew that if it didn't work well in the studio on day one, there would be no point me forcing myself and others to make eleven more. As always, everyone was well prepared and my muse Jay Jessop helped this illustration happen. Right after the last take we knew it was going to be a special one!

Q What did your studio lighting set-up consist of for *Fallen Angels* and how did it differ from *Milky PinUps 2014* or the even more complex *Splash Heroes 2015*?

I like to call the lighting set-up 'The Cage'; it is completely different from my previous series'. The models for *Milky PinUps* were lit by diagonally set softboxes, for *Splash Heroes* we used up to seven heads and mixed soft with hard lighting from reflectors with grids complete with coloured gels to complement the coloured milk. For *Fallen Angels* we built a 'cage' around the model out of giant and medium shoot-through and reflective panels from Lastolite. It gave us a soft but three-dimensional light that I needed for the considerably big angel wings. I couldn't achieve that with a softbox.

Q What sort of photographic equipment did you use for this calendar and why?

I shoot with whatever is in my hands; this time it was a Nikon D800. I still love to work with Phase One cameras like in the previous calendars. The most important thing is to



“YOU HAVE TO BE A DESIGNER TO COME UP WITH THE CONCEPT, NEXT A PHOTOGRAPHER TO SET THE SHOOT, A KIND OF SCULPTOR TO DIRECT THE MILK THE WAY YOU WANT”

know your equipment well, it enables you to push it to its limit and sometimes beyond.

Q What is the process for creating the MILK Calendars, from concept to completion?

To cut a long story short, first you have to be a designer to come up with the concept, next a photographer to set the shoot, a kind of sculptor to direct the milk the way you want, and finally a bit of a painter to put everything together in post-production. Not forgetting a manager to promote the work after it is done.

There is always someone, something or a situation that triggers an image to pop into my head or heart and keeps me awake overnight until I sketch it all out. As soon I have the



concept on paper, I take it to my wife and talk it all through with her. She is my greatest and toughest critic, and I know that if she is taken by the idea then it must be solid.

When the sketching and storyboarding is done, I start working with my team. We run through every single bit of the process and check if we need someone or something specific to make it all happen. The crucial part is to set the date and call time – when this is in place everything goes on its own. Booking the models, preparing the set, equipment checks and so on, all the way up until the shooting day.

After the wrap, it is time for the post-production and from then on it is mainly all on me. Not because I am better than anyone else, it is just because this is a personal project and I treat it in special way.

HOW TO ORDER...

The *Fallen Angel 2016* calendar will be released in January 2016 and you can order it online at: www.AurumLight.com/calendar2016/





ENDLESSLY





EDIBLE

SPACESHIPS POWERED BY SUGAR, ALIEN BEINGS CRAFTED FROM BISCUITS AND CONSTELLATIONS FORMED OF COFFEE BEANS. NO, WE'VE NOT HAD TOO MUCH CAFFEINE AND SUGAR TODAY. WELCOME TO THE MIND OF DINA BELENKO...

Words: JORDAN BUTTERS





RUSSIAN STILL-LIFE photographer Dina Belenko is a master at telling animated tales with inanimate objects. Her creative vision and charming compositions have won her an army of inspired followers around the world, but it was her recent and ambitious *Endless Book* panoramic project that grabbed our eye this time around. The project's goal was to shoot an image each week for an entire year, the results of which could be stitched together to tell a story. "The *Endless Book* project was initiated by illustrator Natalie Ratkovski," explains Dina. "She gathered together a group of artists, and challenged each to create their own endless book throughout the course of one year. The task was to come up with one illustration per week using your chosen speciality – be it photography, watercolour painting, computer graphics, drawing, and so on. The theme was open, the only condition was that each illustration should flow seamlessly into the next. So, by the end of the year, each artist has a panoramic tapestry that represents a year's work. Each frame or illustration can be enjoyed individually, or as a whole."

Dina's theme was outer space, but with a difference – she crafted her make-believe universe out of her favourite still-life subjects – coffee, cupcakes and cookies. "I think that space is a surprisingly great theme for still-life photography," suggests Dina. "Food and science is a good

combination too – after all, cooking sometimes feels like alchemy, especially for people who are not particularly good at it! Combining food with the theme of space exploration gave me plenty of ideas and stories to explore. I use food and drink in many of my still-life images as, for me, they represent a universal visual language; they are common and simple things that help everyone understand my message, wherever they are from. The objects I've used in this project, especially, can be found almost everywhere and they can help tell almost any story. I love the ease and beauty of basing my works on them."

Ask anyone who has taken on any form of photographic challenge and they'll confirm that staying motivated isn't easy. Shooting one strong image a week quickly gets difficult once the creative juices start to dry up, and that's without considering that Dina's project not only had to maintain a cohesive look and theme throughout, but each frame had to blend perfectly into the next. "Before starting this project, I struggled with the idea of shooting a series," confesses Dina. "For me, a large series was three images! All of my images start with a sketch, but when planning the *Endless Book* I couldn't sketch out every single image in advance. After I established my story's protagonist – the person whose hands that you see in the images – I came up with a three-act structure: dreaming of space,

BIOGRAPHY



Still-life photographer Dina Belenko lives in Khabarovsk in south-east Russia. A professional freelance photographer for four years, she specialises in creating unique still-life images for local companies as well as shooting book covers, CD sleeves, editorial pieces and stock images for clients all around the world. She sells her stock images through Getty Images and 500px Prime. www.500px.com/arken

travelling through the galaxy and returning home to Earth. I then prepared a handful of raw ideas, such as a cupcake turning into a shooting star, a xenomorph made from crackers or doughnuts and icing sugar forming a planet with concentric rings."

The concept of telling a story through inanimate objects is a noticeable and important theme in Dina's still-lives. While she doesn't bring her props to life in the literal sense, she manages to convey the idea of dreaming, impending adventure or wanderlust through everyday things. "I've always been keen on the idea of unrealised events," she explains. "Recently I've noticed that often the 'hero' of my pictures is just thinking about or preparing for an adventure, instead of actually doing something. My traveller is always packing the case but never going out. It might be



“I THINK IT’S MY FAVOURITE STORY – SOMEONE COMPLETELY ORDINARY WITH A LITTLE SPARK OF ADVENTURE INSIDE”

someone who is looking at stars, dreaming about ocean depths or wanting to become a magician – I think everyone can relate to this sense of daydreaming, or excitement from planning. It’s my favourite story – someone completely ordinary with a little spark of adventure inside.”

As Dina mentioned, all of her images start on paper – she carefully plans and sketches out each frame so that she already knows what the image will look like before she’s ➔

All images: “When I first started working on my *Endless Book* series I was terrified – I had to make 52 pictures. Me, who used to call a series only three photos in a row! I pulled myself together and made a list of sweets and a another list of celestial objects, and thought which of them could be combined. As it turns out, cookies can, in fact, become an asteroid belt and a doughnut is pretty good for the centre of a star system!”



picked up her Nikon D800. “This is actually my favourite part,” she reveals. “It’s the time when I find the motivation for each object and its integrating vector. What are these objects? How did they come here? Who brought them? Who is the protagonist? What’s going on? Each photo has a coherent story behind it and I want the one frame that I capture to represent the culminating point of that story.” Storyboard complete, Dina then sets about creating or sourcing her props, paying close attention to the little details of course, and preparing her composition before she starts shooting: “The shooting stage itself doesn’t usually take very long as I have it all planned out beforehand. It’s only when there’s a dynamic element to create or control that it takes a bit more time, such as using sparklers, smoke or coffee splashes.”

THERE ARE SO MANY INTERESTING THINGS THAT SURROUND US! TAKE A COFFEE CUP FOR EXAMPLE: IT MAY BELONG TO AN ASTRONOMER AND REFLECT THE STARS ABOVE OR A LUNAR ECLIPSE

Dina not only approached each image in her *Endless Book* as an individual piece, she had to be aware of the finished image fitting into her story, and making the blend between the neighbouring images seem natural and seamless. It wasn’t as hard as it sounds however: “Matching up the frames wasn’t a problem. The lighting remained fairly consistent throughout and my story

included some jumps in the timeline, so neighbouring frames could be lit differently – a couple of times I even used a hard light with strong shadows and these photos fit perfectly. I planned my compositions in such a way that some elements from the previous picture could flow into the next. Other than that, keeping the background dark and consistent, and shooting from the same overhead point of view, was enough to maintain cohesion.”

Like all of Dina’s work, her *Endless Book* project is far more than just a collection of ‘things’ photographed. Composition is crucial in all forms of photography, but when it comes to still-lives there has to be a particular attention to detail and an eye for what works and what doesn’t, which she certainly possesses. In any one of Dina’s images, everything appears ‘in-place’,



and the positioning of her props seems natural and unforced. Dina is adamant that none of this comes naturally, and is a result of experience and practice. “The important thing about composition is remembering the message that you’re trying to get across,” explains Dina. “Do you want a balanced image or a dynamic one? Do you want it to be pleasing for eyes or slightly chaotic and disturbing? Getting to grips with composition is much like learning a foreign language: the more you practise, the easier it is for people to understand you.”

Dina’s creativity is enviously never ending. Where others might struggle to see the picture potential in an everyday object, her head is brimming with fantastical ideas. See that coffee cup? That’s a vessel for travelling across the galaxy. Those chocolate chip cookies? Well, they can be an asteroid

belt. A dusting of icing sugar becomes a trail of burnt rocket fuel expelled as a spaceship enters orbit. After you see these inanimate objects transformed in one of her masterful compositions it all seems so obvious, but it’s concocting those creative connections in the first place that gives Dina’s work the edge over most other still-life photographers. “You just need to look around,” Dina states, making it seem oh-so-simple. “There are so many interesting things that surround us! Take a coffee cup for example: it may belong to an astronomer and reflect the stars above or a lunar eclipse. Or you can fill it with hot coffee and have steam rising above it – in this steam kites or balloons and blimps might fly. You just need to ask questions of your props. Things are marvellous, they are responsive and supple. They can be pure inspiration themselves.”


All images: “I found it helpful to have a collection of things I want to try – locations, stories to illustrate, beautiful colour palettes, schemes of lighting, compositional tricks, etc. It’s not a to-do list, it’s more like I-can-give-it-a-try list. Maybe you’ll never complete it, but you’ll also never struggle for ideas again.”

IN THE BAG...

To record her creative compositions in all of their tactile intricacy, Dina uses the Nikon D800, a 36-megapixel full-frame camera with amazing ability to record detail. Dina’s *Endless Book* project was shot using the lightweight and fast NIKKOR AF-S 50mm f/1.8G. She also owns the NIKKOR AF-S VR Micro 105mm f/2.8G and has her eye on a NIKKOR PC-E Micro 85mm f/2.8D Tilt-Shift lens as the next addition to her outfit.





A black and white photograph of a person's hand, showing the palm and fingers. A bird's talon is gripping the index finger. The background is dark and textured, possibly a bird's wing or feathers.

*The*BigInterview

A SHOW OF HANDS

BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHER TIM BOOTH TALKS TO CAROLINE SCHMIDT ABOUT HIS LATEST BOOK OF RAW PORTRAITS THAT REVEALS ALMOST 90 PEOPLE, BUT NOT A SINGLE FACE



“ONE AFTERNOON IN May 1996, I popped in on my 95-year-old grandmother for our weekly chat. She was, as usual, sitting in her garden, feet wrapped in plastic bags to keep out the damp, her Wellingtons long abandoned since arthritis rendered them too uncomfortable. As we sat having tea in the shade of an apple tree... I noticed her hands. Gnarled and twisted with age, wrapped around her walking stick as if rooted there, they were not only visually striking, they seemed also to be a poignant mark of the passage of her long life,” narrates Tim as he remembers the first portrait of the series. It may not have been a planned beginning, but his grandmother’s hands became the ignitor for a project that captivated Tim for the next two decades.

“When I saw the image in the darkroom, it became my favourite portrait of her. These hands had lived through two World Wars, still wore the wedding ring after 39 years as a widow, played the piano everyday and made the very best ginger beer; it seemed to me as if her life was woven into her hands,” says Tim.

Tim set out to explore and expand on the concept of this different kind of portraiture,

piecing together a wish-list of potential people he would want to photograph. People whose hands were particularly important to them in terms of skill and strength – from a butcher to a baker, a clock mender and a ballerina, even a fire starter – his book, *A Show of Hands*, depicts 88 people and their talents. Every image is a dramatic black & white, tells a striking story and was either shot on film using a Nikon F2 and a 55mm macro lens on Tri-X or, most recently, a Canon EOS 5D Mk III.

Among the mere mortals, Tim has had the pleasure of working with some of the world’s most well-known people on this project, including Pink Floyd’s Nick Mason, Sir Patrick Moore, England rugby player Jonny Wilkinson, Sir Cliff Richard and even explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes.

“While every person in the book has a story worth hearing, I’m still moved by the likes of John Matthews, the coal miner, as he lived a life I can’t imagine, and a ferryman called Charlie Baker who used to row people across the Thames. As much as I’ve completed this book, I don’t think I’ll ever finish the project, as the list of people I’d like to shoot continues to grow slowly.

1) Molly Booth, grandmother; 2) Anna Watkins, rower; 3) Brian Harman, zoo keeper; 4) Sir Ranulph Fiennes, explorer; 5) Tony Hart, artist; 6) Jonny Wilkinson, rugby player.





“THESE HANDS HAD LIVED THROUGH TWO WORLD WARS, STILL WORE THE WEDDING RING AFTER 39 YEARS AS A WIDOW, PLAYED THE PIANO EVERYDAY AND MADE THE VERY BEST GINGER BEER; IT SEEMED TO ME AS IF HER LIFE WAS WOVEN INTO HER HANDS”

“So far I have two favourite people that I’ve photographed, simply because they were so wonderful: Tony Hart, an absolutely delightful man; and Jonny Wilkinson who was totally on board with the project. He understood how his hands were important, for him even more so than his feet. He was really the only person who ‘got’ the project wholeheartedly, so it was an easy decision to ask him to write the book’s foreword.”

Tim is well suited to taking an unusual approach to photography; he’s always been an undefinable photographer, someone wanting to keep his skills and the subjects he shoots changing and evolving. He spent the early years of his career as an editorial photographer, shooting fashion, food and portraits all around the world, which also led to him photographing landscapes and travel portraits. He has been published in *Traveller*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Times*, *ES* and *GQ*, but for the last two decades,

Tim’s been shooting for mainly advertising and design agencies out of his London studio. All the while developing his personal project. “I’m in to diversification, which I know is incredibly unpopular; people like you to be a very specific photographer – which used to wind me up terribly in the old days. I hate defining myself, although the industry almost insists on it. I’d say being so varied has definitely been a hindrance; I think if I’d said early on that this is what I do and this is all I do, I probably would have had a very different and probably less varied career than I have had.”

Tim’s ability to avoid being pigeonholed in a photographic discipline lends well to his creative visions, such as this book, and means he approaches every shoot differently and yet the same by setting himself strict parameters to work within. “I always had one or two ideas in mind as to what I would like to achieve with each subject’s hands, ➤





but invariably they change when I start to shoot due to the lighting or the person's range of movement. Since the start, I always tried to include some context so the pictures tell a story, but how I shot them depended on the hands, the person and the situation. I had very little time to shoot many of these images, so while I made plans and sketches the shots were opportunistic."

The parameters Tim set himself – to only use British subjects in natural light and in less than half an hour – he says focused his mind, stopped the shoot from getting too complex and wasting the subject's precious time. Similarly, he felt lugging studioflash into someone's home was going to irritate some people and detract from the personal experience he was trying to create.

"The reason I kept to British people is I didn't have the money to fly all over the world to photograph the Dalai Lama, as much as I would love to do that. Having these parameters did mean I missed the odd shot, often due to the light or not being able to get their hands to do what I needed them to do.

"I couldn't pick the time I was shooting, so it was often a case of making the best of what I had. If I could I'd shoot outdoors in the shade and use reflectors, but I also worked by windows and even in a stairwell once. To get the dark background, I used a sheet of velvet material with a slot cut out that I had them pass their hands through, and then placed their hands in the light."

1) Bob Tyrell, clock mender; 2) John Makepeace, designer;
3) Bob Bury, embalmer; 4) Peter Layton, glassblower;
5) Nick Mason, drummer; 6) Jeff King, gladiator.





Tim kept his kit to a minimum: a couple of reflectors, his velvet sheet, a camera, tripod and lenses. While he never quite knew what was in store for him at a shoot, he relies on his Canon 24-105mm as a workhorse lens but prefers to use a macro lens when he can, similar to when he shot on a Nikon F2. The transition from film to digital was quite a slow one for Tim, as it wasn't until the Canon EOS 5D that the way he work changed permanently, and the Mark III that he finally saw better definition than what he came to expect from film.

"The advent of digital has certainly changed my life in terms of immediacy and it's a lot easier to shoot on digital that it was on film, but I hope my style of shooting has been fairly seamless between the two mediums. In the darkroom, I used to do a lot of dodging and burning to enhance the detail

“I ALWAYS TRIED TO INCLUDE SOME CONTEXT SO THE PICTURES TELL A STORY BUT HOW I SHOT THEM DEPENDED ON THE HANDS”

and grit from my Tri-X film, experimenting with different levels of multigrade filters to bring out texture. Now I try to emulate the effect as much as I can in Adobe Lightroom using Raw files, and blue filters when converting to black & white to bring out the same level of detail and texture.”

To think that this book has been a working progress for several decades is quite extraordinary. The creation of the images are of similar style, but so different in terms of

the technology used and approach. Back at the beginning, Tim had to write a lot of letters to contact everyone he wanted to shoot for this project, then wait for their replies. It was only in the last few years, according to Tim, that he managed to shoot a lot more people for the project, due to email and the internet making it happen faster.

Although for some, the book is interesting for its two decades of dedication and for showing the development from film to digital, for Tim, *A Show of Hands* isn't a photography book at all: it's a book about the stories of the subjects. "The book is a collection of stories about hands that are telling their pursuit of excellence. It's like a physical record of their toil of endeavour," concludes Tim. And he's right, despite the beautiful imagery, this book is a humbling and inspiring read. To buy the book, visit: www.ashowofhands.co.uk or www.timbooth.com

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THE A-MOUNT LIVES ON!

SONY FINALLY ANNOUNCES ITS LATEST A-MOUNT ADDITION TO LINE-UP

ALMOST AS SOON as we'd raised the question of whether Sony was committed to continuing its A-mount line-up of interchangeable lens cameras last month (*Snapshots*, *Digital SLR Photography*, Issue 109), news landed in our inbox of the new Sony Alpha 68 – that answers that question then!

Offering a 24-megapixel APS-C type Exmor CMOS sensor, the A68 also boasts what Sony are calling a 4D FOCUS system for speedy autofocus and 79 AF points to aid accurate tracking. Thanks to Sony's Translucent Mirror Technology, the AF system continues to track during shutter release while the sensor records frames at an impressive 8fps. There's a large ISO range at your disposal – 100-25600 to be exact – thanks to the BIONZ X image processing engine, and images (or HD videos) are framed through the bright OLED Tru-Finder, or the 2.7in tilting LCD screen.

The new Sony A68 will be available around March 2016, with no official UK price confirmed as of yet. Sony has announced European pricing at €600 body-only or €700 with 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 SAM II lens, so this is a good indicator. www.sony.co.uk



PORTRAIT COLLABORATION

Lastolite by Manfrotto, the manufacturer of professional photography lighting equipment, has launched a selection of portable backgrounds and a flashgun modifier aimed at portrait photographers.

The Ezybox Speed-Lite 2, priced at £50, attaches to a flashgun and can be used both on- and off-camera. Building upon the success of the original

Ezybox, the latest version has removable internal and external diffusion panels to improve quality of light, and a strap and ratchet to keep the softbox attached to any form or size of flashgun. Expect a test of the Ezybox 2 soon.

The company has also released three new Perspective Backgrounds, costing £170 each, as it expands its range of collapsible double-sided backgrounds. They can be used with Lastolite's Magnetic Background Support System. www.lastolite.co.uk



NIKON TEASE UPCOMING D5

We all knew it was coming but Nikon has officially announced that it is working on its next flagship camera, the Nikon D5. So, what do we know? Not much unfortunately – only that the D5 will boast an FX-format sensor (no big surprise there). It's also likely to offer at least 16-megapixels, as per the D4S, and will be able to rattle frames off at a minimum 11fps. We'll keep you posted on specifications and price as and when we hear about it. www.nikon.co.uk

Nikon

HASSELBLAD TAKES TO THE SKIES

Drone specialists DJI are taking more of a foray into the camera market. After launching its first dedicated Micro Four-Thirds cameras in September – the Zenmuse X5 and X5R – DJI has now become a shareholder in Hasselblad. No stranger to commercial partnerships, Hasselblad's relationship with Sony has seen the premium camera brand launch all manner of re-branded and spruced-up cameras over the past few years – maybe we're not far off the first Hasselblad drone? Only time will tell. www.hasselblad.com



... **DJI set no-go zones** Drone safety around restricted airspace has been an increasing concern since the rise in popularity of consumer aerial photography. DJI are tackling the problem head-on by introducing a new geofencing system that will stop the drone from taking off, landing or flying near restricted areas. The data can be updated in real-time via live flight information. The update is due to arrive towards the end of this year via a firmware upgrade. www.dji.com



NEW HDR SOFTWARE UNVEILED

Pro photographer Trey Ratcliff has teamed up with software experts Macphun to launch a specialist HDR program for Apple Mac users – Macphun Aurora. The app offers a variety of preset-based tweaks for expanding dynamic range, as well as manual adjustments for those who want full control. Whether you're after full-blown cornea-melting effects or a more subtle transition from shadow detail to recovered highlights, Aurora has something to suit all tastes.

There are two versions – Aurora HD (USD\$40) and Aurora HD Pro (USD\$100). To find out more, or to give it a try, head to the Aurora website to download a free trial to see how you get on: www.aurorahdr.com



Festive savings

FUJI FREEBIES! Fujifilm has jumped on the Christmas cashback bandwagon with a host of cracking offers that run until 11 January 2016. Pick up a new Fuji X-T1, X-E2, X-T10 or X100T from an official retailer and you can claim anything from up to £75 cashback, a free lens or a battery grip, depending on the model you opt for. There's also up to £375 cashback available when you buy one or more XF lenses. www.fuji-offers.com

NIKON GET A GRIP Alongside its cashback offers on select Nikon cameras and flashguns, you can now also claim a free battery grip when you purchase a Nikon D7200 or D610 between now and 28 January 2016. Cameras must be purchased from an official UK retailer and include proof of purchase. Be quick – you've only got until 28 February 2016 to get your claim in. To claim, and for more info, visit www.nikon.co.uk/promotions

WHICH CAMERA UNDER £1,500?

WITH A WHOLE NEW YEAR'S WORTH OF PHOTOGRAPHY ONLY A FEW WEEKS AWAY, THERE IS NO BETTER TIME THAN CHRISTMAS TO SNAG YOURSELF A HIGHLY SPECIFIED CAMERA AT A GREAT PRICE. HERE'S EIGHT OF THE BEST TO CONSIDER

OUR BUYERS' GUIDE in the last issue looked at budget outfits costing under £750 and highlighted nine of the best digital SLRs and CSCs for those looking for a great entry-level model. In the second part of our buyers' guide, we're looking at eight popular models of DSLR and CSC ranging in price from around £850 through to just under £1,500. Our selection covers quite a price range so there is a wide diversity between the group, but one thing they all have in common is that they're all top-level performers, scoring Highly Rated or Best Buy awards when originally tested. So whichever you decide is best for you, you know you're getting one of the best.



SPECIAL OFFERS!

We researched major UK dealers and brands before we went to print and noted many offering a variety of special offers with selected models. As well as providing their own deals, most dealers also highlighted cashback offers on cameras, lenses and accessories*. As always, we'd urge you to support your local camera dealer, especially at this time of year. Below are some of the best promotions we discovered.

✔ **CANON:** Cashback of £20, £30, £50, £60 or £100 on selected Canon EOS models. Cashback of £20, £45, £50 and £75 on selected lenses and flashguns.

✔ **FUJIFILM:** Cashback of £40 or £75 on selected X-series models. Buy one XF lens to claim £75 cashback, two XF lenses to claim £225 cashback and three XF lenses to claim £375 cashback. Claim a free Fujifilm Vertical Grip with selected models. Claim a free XC 50-230mm lens with selected models.

✔ **NIKON:** Cashback of £20, £30, £40 or £50 on selected Nikon DSLRs and CSCs. Cashback of £10, £15 or £20 on selected Nikon flashguns.

✔ **OLYMPUS:** Cashback of £100 on selected Olympus OM-D models. Cashback of £30, £50, £75 or £100 on selected Olympus lenses. Claim a free Power Battery Holder Grip with selected models.

✔ **PANASONIC:** Cashback of £50, £100, £120 or £150 on selected Panasonic Lumix models.

✔ **SONY:** Cashback of £50 or £100 on selected Sony Alpha models.

* OTHER OFFERS ARE AVAILABLE AND SOME EXPIRE IN LATE DECEMBER; PLEASE CHECK OFFER DETAILS BEFORE PURCHASE.

WHAT TO CONSIDER: Top tips for choosing your camera...

The good news to remember is that you can't buy a poor camera in this price range. The key thing is to ensure you buy the model that best suits your needs – now and in the future. While some cameras come supplied with a standard zoom, the majority are available body-only – the thinking behind this is that many potential buyers are upgrading from a less-specified model, so will already have lenses in their outfit. While resolution is important, consider other important factors like size and weight, key features and the range of lenses and other accessories available. The following are the key buying considerations you should make:

✔ **Try before you buy** Shortlist favourites, then try them at a store before buying, as you'll prefer the handling of some more than others. Be sure you're happy with the controls and feel of a camera before you commit to buying it.

✔ **Future-proof yourself** Check out the system of lenses and accessories that are available – you want to be sure you can add to your outfit in the future. Most brands aren't a problem in this regard.

✔ **Avoid temptation** Quite often the next model up won't be a huge jump in price, but stick to your budget. Your money is better spent on lenses and accessories.

✔ DSLR or Compact System Camera?

Both types of camera are highly capable. Mirrorless models are generally smaller but not always the case. Some digital SLRs have the benefit of offering full-frame sensors.

✔ Image resolution isn't your priority

All models offer high enough resolution, so focus more on sensor size. In theory larger sensors deliver better quality than smaller sensors, although it can be difficult to notice a difference on most models.

✔ **Haggle** Discounts are rare, as dealers work to very tight margins, but shop around and see if they will price match. Or, try and get a free accessory or two thrown in.

Best Buys from last month's Buyers' Guide on outfits under £750...



● Canon EOS 70D

The Canon EOS 70D was one of the veterans in last month's buyers' guide, but that means you get this enthusiast-level camera at an entry-level price. In every area this is an APS-C model that scores highly – perfect for advanced amateurs and even for those who make a career out of photography. It boasts extensive features and great performance, and the price drop adds even more appeal.



● Canon EOS 750D

The EOS 750D is an excellent choice as a first DSLR or upgrade. With a specification that doesn't leave you wanting, a cracking sensor, great AF and connectivity options, there's not much missing. The biggest conundrum is whether to go for the Canon EOS 750D or stump up the extra £50 for the EOS 760D – it comes down to personal taste, as both are very good cameras.



● Nikon D5500

Regardless of its price or modest position in the Nikon range, not only does the 24.2-megapixel Nikon D5500 deliver class-leading image quality, it does so with ease. The touchscreen LCD simply side-steps multi-function buttons and regular visits to menus and makes the D5500 better, easier, faster, and just really good to use. One of the very best value options if you're on a budget.



● Pentax K-S2

Any brand challenging Canon and Nikon needs to deliver something special and the K-S2 fits into this category. It packs in all the features you'd expect and then some, within a body that offers added protection from the elements. Add to this image quality on a par with anything else at this price point and Pentax has a winner in the 20.12-million pixel KS-2. It's definitely one for the shortlist.

Fujifilm X-T1

Street price: £850 body only (£1,000 graphite silver)

Image sensor: APS-CX-Trans CMOS II (23.5x15.6mm)

Image resolution: 16.3-megapixels

Phone: 01234 572000

Website: www.fujifilm.eu/uk

This good-looking camera has styling like much of the rest of the X-series, with a magnesium exterior that's home to a trio of aluminium top-plate dials to control ISO, shutter speed and exposure compensation. These dials take care of most of the X-T1's shooting functions, and pretty much everything on this camera can be done without looking at a digital screen.

The exposure compensation dial offers a range from -3EV to +3EV in one-third increments, with the electronic viewfinder instantly relaying the effects of any changes made. But it's the OLED electronic viewfinder that's the jewel in the X-T1's crown. Offering 0.77x magnification (bigger than the Canon EOS 5D Mk III and Nikon D800) and a lag time of just 0.005 seconds, it's really very good. Shooting information is overlaid on the viewfinder and, if you tilt the camera into portrait-orientation, the information rotates too. The viewfinder features multiple focus-assist modes, and there's even a dual focus



mode that lets you establish perfect focus and composition at the same time.

With a solid weight that's not too heavy, the X-T1 packs the same 16.3-megapixel X-Trans CMOS II APS-C sensor and EXR Processor II as its siblings: the X-E2 and X-T10. The hybrid AF system works well in low light, and the continuous AF mode is good, much better since the recent and free v4.0 firmware update. The X-T1 offers a standard ISO range of 200-6400, expandable to 100-51200, although the default H2 setting maxes out at 25600 and needs changing in the menu should you wish to see in the dark.

The X-T1 is a class performer. The dials are a joy, AF is reliable (though the selection point is too large for some scenarios) and in-camera JPEGs are superb.

VERDICT

The Fujifilm X-T1 is a strong performer, offering stylish design and superb performance. The features rival many pro DSLRs and image quality is fantastic. There's also a great selection of X-mount lenses available. If you're looking for DSLR-like features and quality without the bulk then the X-T1 (or the more affordable X-T10) should be seriously considered.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★☆
Features	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Panasonic Lumix GH4

Street price: £1,000 body only

Image sensor: Micro Four-Thirds (17.3x13mm)

Image resolution: 16.05-megapixels

Phone: 0844 844 3899

Website: www.panasonic.co.uk

The Panasonic Lumix DMC-GH4 is a significant model, being the first Compact System Camera to offer cinema-quality 4K video recording to the masses, it's a product that single-handedly takes home videos to a whole new level. Yet can it deliver still images too?

Despite the fact that the GH4 falls into the mirrorless Compact System Camera (CSC) category, the camera itself is largely modelled around that of a classic DSLR design, and takes its place at the top of Panasonic's range of interchangeable lens cameras. The GH4 looks slick and feels comfortable, with a reasonably lightweight body meaning you won't get neckache, yet it still offers everything you'd expect from a high-end camera – such as rapid 12fps burst shooting and a choice of 49 AF points. The GH4 features an Electronic Viewfinder (EVF) to help you compose shots, which has an impressive 2,359,000-dot resolution. Just below the EVF is the touch-sensitive, 3in LCD screen, sporting a



resolution of 1,036,000 dots. As you'd expect from a pro-level camera, there are lots of dials and shortcut buttons, and we found the ones for White Balance, ISO and exposure compensation extremely handy.

In terms of performance, the GH4 doesn't disappoint: the AF system is consistently fast and accurate, and the ISO range is able to span from 200-25600 (our test images showed that both luma and chroma noise was kept well at bay up to ISO 3200). The optional 14-140mm lens is very good, especially when shooting in cities – you can switch between a nice wide angle for an entire cityscape, then quickly back to the telephoto end for intricate details. Images had good levels of sharpness, while the built-in stabiliser kept pictures free from the effects of shake.

VERDICT

The GH4 delivers high-quality images with top-tier AF performance to boot. It's comfortable, intuitive and packed with features. Despite a fall in price, it's still a little on the pricey side, and it's the GH4's 4K video that'll make or break the deal for you: if the idea of recording in 4K appeals, then the GH4 is a top choice, but if video's not your thing then look elsewhere.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★☆
Features	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Sony Alpha 7R

Street price: £1,000 body only

Image sensor: Full-frame Exmor CMOS (35.9x24mm)

Image resolution: 36.4-megapixels

Phone: 0870 523 7237

Website: www.sony.co.uk

There are a number of A7 variants available: the A7 has a 24.3-megapixel sensor, the A7S a lower resolution but higher sensitivity 12.2-megapixel unit and this, the A7R, an impressive 36.4-megapixel CMOS sensor, sans optical low-pass filter. The lightweight, compact aluminium body feels comfortable, with a large rubber grip giving you plenty to hold on to. The A7R has an air of quality to it, from the solid metal dials to the minimalist front design and large central viewfinder hump. Around the back of the camera there's a large and clear 3in tilting LCD screen, a comfortable thumb rest and an assortment of easy-access dials and controls. The high-resolution OLED Tru-Finder electronic viewfinder automatically activates upon raising the camera to your eye, and even focuses the image for you. The image is bright and clear and performance is especially good in low light.

The A7R's controls are well laid out considering its small size, which aids ease



of use. Unfortunately the same doesn't extend to the menu system, which takes some getting used to. Connectivity-wise, the A7R boasts both Wi-Fi and NFC. This can be used to send images wirelessly to a tablet or smartphone, or to control it remotely via the Play Memories app.

Image quality is quite brilliant. The A7R lacks the anti-aliasing filter found in the A7, and images are fantastically detailed and crisp, with amazing shadow detail. There's an ISO range expandable up to 50-25600, with noise acceptable up to ISO 3200.

The A7R features a 25-point contrast-based AF system, and this is the camera's major downfall. The AF system is sluggish and frustrating, taking its sweet time to locate and lock on to targets – even in good light. Continuous AF isn't great either.

VERDICT

The Sony A7R carries a premium air about it. Offering some nice features, it's capable of superb quality, high-resolution images. It's not cheap, and neither is Sony's range of ZEISS FE-mount lenses. Consider the A7 – it's better in terms of AF performance, but lacks the megapixel count. The A7R is frustratingly close to being a truly great CSC, but is let down by a few faults.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★☆
Features	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Nikon D610

Street price: £1,100 body only

Image sensor: Full-frame (CMOS 36x24mm)

Image resolution: 24.3-megapixels

Phone: 0800 230 220

Website: www.nikon.co.uk

Released in early 2014, the D610 replaced the D600 and corrected a problem highlighted by D600 users of dust on the sensor. Needless to say, this update has been proven to show it suffers no such issues. It's a thing of beauty and the good news is that it isn't just about aesthetics, because behind the smooth curves and refined lines is a piece of kit that has great balance and handling. At launch it was the smallest and lightest FX-format Nikon ever made, and the fact that it's home to a full-frame sensor is incredible given its dainty size. The 24.3-megapixel CMOS sensor may have a similar resolution to Nikon APS-C models, but the larger pixel size means better performance.

In use, the D610 doesn't disappoint. Changing settings is fast and makes total sense, and the camera is so quick that it's always ready to take the next picture. The AF is responsive and accurate, while the LiveView is good – although still a bit inferior to the standard AF system in speed



and response (the AF gets into sharper focus at a slower pace). Previous Matrix metering systems had a few little niggles but continual refinement from Nikon means that it's been well and truly sorted – we can't fault it now.

The EXPEED processor means that coping with Raw files is not a problem, and short sequences don't result in any frame-rate lag. Noise control is just as good: low ISOs give great sharpness, nice saturation and realistic colours, while tests we conducted at ISO 1600 and even ISO 3200 produced perfectly fine images. Converting from Raw to JPEG makes for slightly better images, but the in-camera JPEGs are also good. It's a great choice if you're looking for a relatively compact and affordable full-frame Nikon.

VERDICT

The D610 and its 24.3-megapixel sensor make this a fantastic camera. Its compact size and attractive price point, coupled with ease of use and stunning images, make it a pretty potent package. While you may find pre-owned D600 bodies on the market at much lower prices, we'd urge you to opt for this problem-free update instead. You won't be disappointed.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★○
Features	★★★★○
Performance	★★★★○
Value for money	★★★★○
Overall	★★★★○

Samsung NX1

Street price: £1,150 body only

Image sensor: BSI APS-C CMOS (23.5x15.7mm)

Image resolution: 28.2-megapixels

Phone: 0330 726 7864

Website: www.samsung.co.uk

Aimed at serious photographers, Samsung's flagship mirrorless model looks like an expensive DSLR. The magnesium-alloy body is weather-resistant for use in harsh conditions.

The arrangement of controls follows a similar layout in principle to market-leading DSLR brands. What speeds up selection even further is the 3in LCD touchscreen display which, used along with the ring that surrounds the four-way control, lets you quickly access and select functions. The LCD monitor gives a very crisp 1,036,000-dot display and its use is further enhanced by its tilting platform. The electronic viewfinder is excellent – with a large, sharp 2,360,000-dot resolution screen.

The NX1 boasts Samsung's most powerful DRiME V image processor and its 28-million pixel image sensor, which can shoot 4K video, is the largest of its type with backside illumination (i.e. the circuitry is behind the sensor). The AF system uses a hybrid (passive plus contrast-detection)



system, with 209 contrast-detection points and 205 phase-detection points, of which an impressive 153 are cross-types. The exposure system offers multi-zone (221 segments), centre-weighted and spot patterns. A full range of exposure modes are available, including more than a dozen Smart modes for beginners. Other features include a 15fps (for up to 70 frames) shooting rate, a number of special effects filters, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and NFC.

The NX1 performs extremely well. The AF system is very fast, while the multi-zone metering is hard to fool. Image quality is excellent, with the 28-megapixel sensor giving files with excellent colour rendition, a high level of detail and no evident noise until around ISO 1600. A great model that compares well to similar-priced DSLRs.

VERDICT

The Samsung NX1 is a fantastic mirrorless model and is worth serious consideration. It faces strong competition from the other CSCs, as well as Canon and Nikon digital SLRs, but can hold its own in such strong company. With a decent range of lenses to support it, the NX1 proves to be an innovative and well-specified model that offers plenty for the enthusiast.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★○
Features	★★★★○
Performance	★★★★○
Value for money	★★★★○
Overall	★★★★○

Canon EOS 6D

Street price: £1,150 body only

Image sensor: Full-frame CMOS (36x24mm)

Image resolution: 20.2-megapixels

Phone: 0844 369 0100

Website: www.canon.co.uk

It's been around for over three years, but the Canon EOS 6D still deserves serious consideration. Not many cameras handle better than the EOS 6D, and the design and overall build quality leave you in no uncertain terms that it's a camera right out of the top drawer. APS-C models might be a bit smaller and lighter, but the EOS 6D is still a pretty friendly size given that it houses a full-frame sensor. It's solid and the layout of the controls is suitably user-friendly, with well-marked dials. The 3in LCD screen is sharp (though lacks a bit of the swivel on some of the other cameras in the EOS range), while the big and bright viewfinder is very good (although it has an image coverage of 97% rather than 100%).

The EOS 6D's standout feature is the 20.2-megapixel, full-frame CMOS sensor, which has bigger pixels than you'd get in APS-C sensors. The result? Better and sharper images with less noise. The range of ISO 100-25600 can be expanded as low as ISO 50 or as high as ISO 102400, and can



cope with continuous shooting at a not-to-be-sneezed-at 4.5 frames per second. Creative types will also be pleased with the presence of Wi-Fi and GPS, as well as HDR and multiple exposure modes.

The 11-point AF gives a speedy and responsive performance and focuses well in dim light. The EOS 6D is decent enough for tracking objects, but given that off-centre subjects can flit in and out of focus it means that action photography is not this camera's strength. The 63-zone pattern in the metering system is pretty good, but it's not foolproof – as with most cameras, high contrast and backlit scenes need up to 1EV of exposure compensation. But ultimately, this is a very good quality camera that's enjoyable and user-friendly, with the end result being strong pictures.

VERDICT

If you're seriously into photography and want a camera that's easy to carry around and that won't break the bank, the Canon EOS 6D could be for you. The full-frame sensor will appeal if you're particularly keen on shooting scenes with wide-angle lenses, such as landscapes or interiors. You should also check out Nikon's D610, which is similarly priced.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★☆
Features	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Canon EOS 7D Mk II

Street price: £1,300 body only

Image sensor: APS-C CMOS (22.4x15mm)

Image resolution: 20.2-megapixels

Phone: 0844 369 0100

Website: www.canon.co.uk

The much-anticipated update of the 2009 EOS 7D is a cracker. At 910g it's a hefty piece of kit for an APS-C DSLR, but this works in its favour as its added bulk makes it feel pleasingly solid in the hand.

The EOS 7D Mk II has a chunky handgrip with a rubberised texture and the body has enhanced dust- and weather-proofing that wraps around to the rear thumb rest, for added purchase. A side door on the grip reveals a dual-slot compartment for a CF and SD card. The control layout is near-identical to other Canon top-end models. Dominating the rear is a 1.04-million-dot 3in LCD screen. There's no tilt or touchscreen facility, but the screen quality is excellent. So too is the optical viewfinder which, like its predecessor, offers a full 100% field-of-view and a customisable info display.

The APS-C-sized 20.2-megapixel CMOS sensor now works alongside dual DIGIC 6 processors, which offer a native ISO range of 100 to 16000, further expandable to



51200. There's also built-in GPS for geotagging purposes. Sports and wildlife photographers will appreciate the 10fps shooting rate and extended buffer.

The AF system has been overhauled and now features 65 AF points (the EOS 7D had 19), all of which are the cross-type variety, apart from the centre point, which is an even more accurate dual cross-type. The Mk II has also adopted Intelligent Tracking and Recognition, lifted from the likes of the Canon EOS-1D X. Not surprisingly, the AF performance with both stationary and moving subjects was excellent. The Canon captures an impressive amount of detail. Colours remain true to life, whilst the AWB does a consistent job. ISO performance was also par for the course, with noise only creeping in around the ISO 3200 mark.

VERDICT

We're really impressed with the Canon EOS 7D Mk II. This update offers a host of impressive new features that will excite both photographers and videographers. If you're looking for a camera with rapid burst shooting, lightning quick AF and a host of advanced features this Canon ticks all the boxes. A drop in price since launch makes it decent value.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★★
Features	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★★

Nikon D750

Street price: £1,500 body only

Image sensor: Full-frame CMOS (35.9x24mm)

Image resolution: 24.3-megapixels

Phone: 0800 230 220

Website: www.nikon.co.uk

The D750 was the third FX-format DSLR to be released by Nikon in 2014 and the first in a new line. The outer casing is weather-sealed and made from magnesium alloy and carbon fibre. The deep handgrip has a textured rubber coating, with a small door hiding two SD card slots. It uses Nikon's standard button layout, but the user interface has been updated and is both slick and practical. The 3.2in, 1,229,000-dot LCD sits on a vari-angle platform and was the first found on any full-frame DSLR.

The 24.3-megapixel resolution CMOS sensor is new and retains the AA filter. The AF system is the same as that on the D810 and D4S, using 51 AF points in a diamond formation, 15 of which are cross-types. Videographers will also be pleased that the D750 adopts some of the D810's advanced video options, most notably capturing Full 1080p HD footage at up to 60fps.

The metering system has been upgraded and uses 91,000 pixels (the D610 had 2,016



pixels). It also has a slightly faster continuous burst rate than the D610 (6fps) and D810 (5fps), and is able to capture images at speeds of up to 6.5fps at full resolution. The shutter is capable of speeds ranging from 1/4000sec to 30 seconds, as well as Bulb mode, whilst the ISO spans from 50-512000 by using the expanded 'Hi' and 'Lo' options. The D750 is the first Nikon DSLR to feature built-in Wi-Fi, although there is no GPS. The AF system is taken straight from the likes of the D4S and doesn't disappoint, coping brilliantly with static and moving subjects, even in low light or areas of low contrast.

Image quality is impressive, recording a generous amount of detail and impressive dynamic range. Noise is handled well, with JPEGs being noise-free up to ISO 1600.

VERDICT

The D750 gives Nikon the edge in terms of choice when it comes to the full-frame camera market, giving consumers a total of five different options to pick from.

Despite being somewhat of an amalgamation of the D610 and D810, the D750 does have its defining features: most notably built-in Wi-Fi, tilting screen and 6.5fps burst rate. A great all-round DSLR.

Handling/Ease of use	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★

Conclusion: Which camera?

As with our group review in the last issue, there are plenty of options for those looking to get the very best for their money. Pretty much every model here (with the possible exception of the Sony) could have received at least a Highly Rated rating, but we've been extremely strict to narrow our awards to the top four models.

Our two Highly Rated models have both been around for over a year but can still easily hold their own against newer rivals. The Canon EOS 6D boasts a high-quality full-frame sensor that delivers stunning results and a great mix of features, plus its age means it has benefitted from a fall in price to make it even better value. The Fujifilm X-T1 may have a more affordable sibling in the X-T10, but its weather-proof body and great range of features ensures it remains a great CSC in its own right.

Our two Best Buys are two of the more recent introductions into their respective DSLR line-ups and boast up-to-date specifications, impressive handling and superb performance. What's more, they're both very well priced too. The Canon EOS 7D Mk II is as good as you can hope to find in the APS-C market, offering a fantastic AF system, stacks of features and modes and stunning image quality. If you're not too bothered about full-frame, you won't find anything better. Nikon's D750 is an incredible bit of kit, and while it's the most expensive model in our review, a recent drop in price makes it exceptional value. In terms of full-frame models within this price range, it's our pick of the bunch and an easy choice as Best Buy.



CANON EOS 7D MKII



NIKON D750



CANON EOS 6D

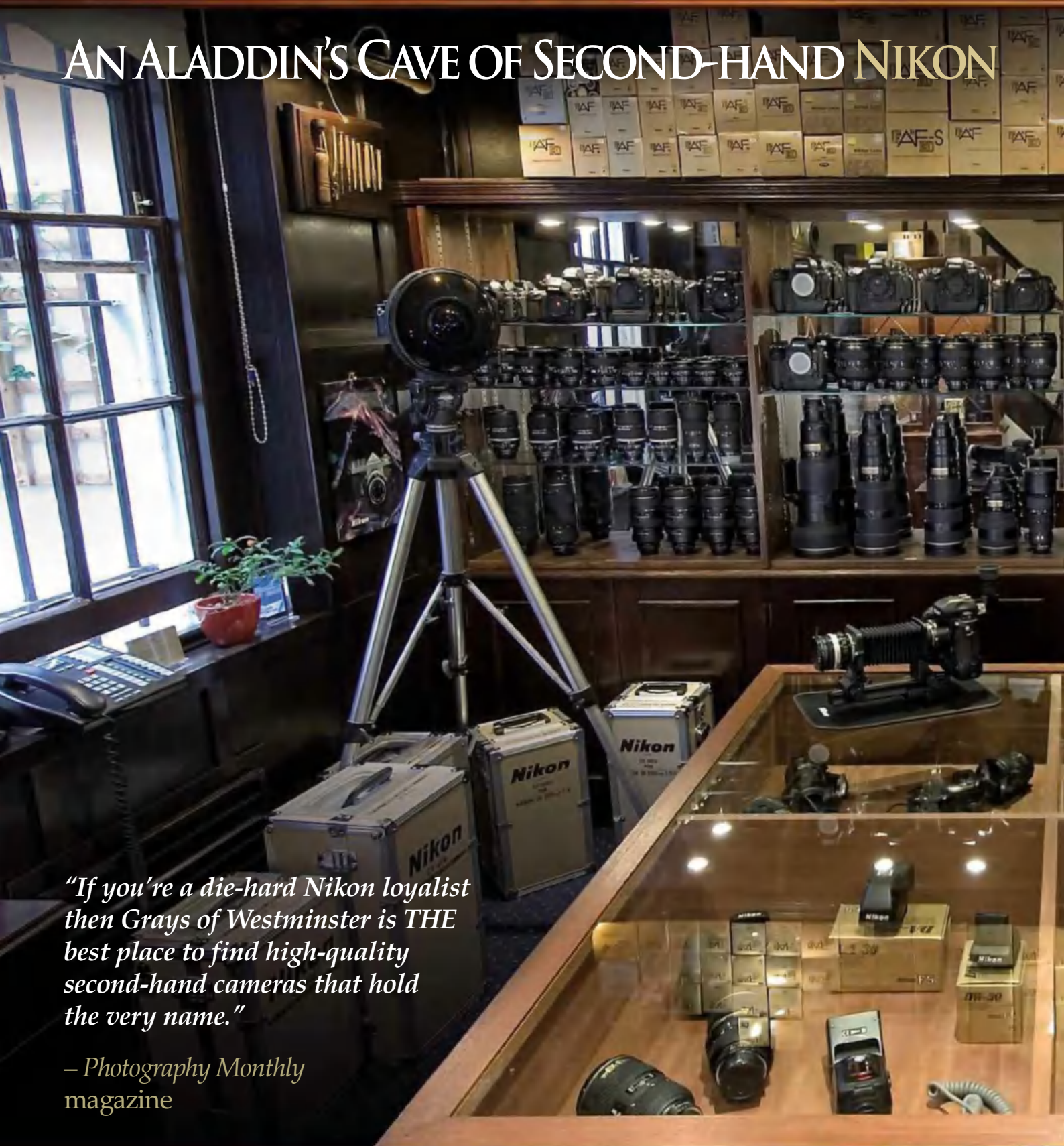


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EXTREME ND FILTERS

THE SPECIAL LOOK THAT A TEN-STOP NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTER GIVES IS AS POPULAR AS EVER, AND THERE ARE TEMPTING NEW FILTER OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Test: RICHARD HOPKINS

WHEN LEE FILTERS launched the Big Stopper in 2010 they thought it was a fad, with long exposures being an obscure technique, pursued by a few diehards escaped from the F64 Group. The B+W 3.0 was just about the only decent extreme ND filter on the market, but quite difficult to find, and Hoya didn't even bother to import its version to the UK. But now, after some 30,000 Big Stoppers have been sold worldwide, the fad looks



here to stay and there is a multitude of extreme-density filters about, with new or improved versions appearing all the time.

Relatively new to the scene is a range of lighter-toned ND filters, rated at six or seven stops, for those occasions when ten is too much. That often happens with our British weather, particularly when the light is lower around the golden hour. There are also a lot of vari-ND filters, covering an adjustable range of two to eight stops, and they seem like the perfect solution, until you use one. The problem, even with the most expensive,

is they're prone to a large, dark cross shape appearing over the image when used with wide-angle lenses. They're best avoided.

When choosing what to buy, the first consideration is the density. Once you know that, you can work out the difference between the shutter speeds pre- and post-filter, giving you an extended shutter speed to be used for creative, or dynamic effect. For example, a ten-stop filter will knock 1/1000sec down to one full second, 1/500sec becomes two seconds, 1/250sec goes to four seconds, and so on. Density can

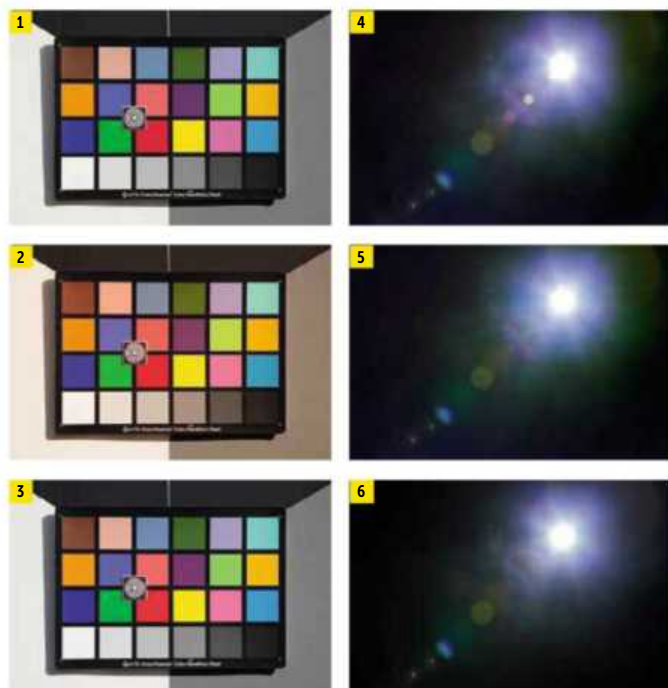
be marked in different ways - in stops, optical density, or filter factor. For example, one stop is 0.3 or 2x, two stops is 0.6 or 4x, three stops is 0.9 or 8x, and so on up to ten stops, which is 3.0 or 1024x.

When using so-called extreme ND filters, it's vital to seal everything against light leaks, as even the smallest will cause problems. The viewfinder must be covered, as light gets in there and creeps through the tiniest gaps around the mirror, and on to the sensor. With square slot-in filters, the holder must be completely tight front and rear.



HOW WE DID THE TESTS

- **DENSITY:** Measured by comparing carefully adjusted exposures, with and without the filter. Density can vary batch to batch and, while that doesn't affect the result, it's important to check your own filter to calculate exposure times accurately.
 - **COLOUR:** Assessed by shooting a Macbeth-type colour test target in bright sun. All extreme ND filters have at least a tiny colour cast, most somewhat more, and that obviously varies between brands, but can also change slightly from batch to batch and in different kinds of light. Good neutrality is nice to have, but actually not that important at the shooting stage – what matters is how the images look after post-processing and all these filters performed well on that score (see panel, below). The three example images below were taken, (1) without a filter, (2) with the B+W 110 ten-stop filter, colour uncorrected, and (3) with colour corrected. Note that after post-processing, the corrected image is identical to the first shot taken without a filter.
 - **FLARE:** The main difference is between coated and uncoated filters, with the latter producing additional coloured flare spots when a very bright light is included in the frame, such as the sun. When tested, all the coated filters showed very similar flare characteristics, barely any worse than shooting without a filter. The uncoated ones produced slightly larger flare patches, and introduced a couple of extra flare spots. Some filters are coated on only one side, in which case most benefit is had when the coated side faces inwards to minimise ghosting, when bright light can bounce off the shiny surface of the sensor, and back again from the rear of the filter. The Haida Pro-II MC came here fitted the wrong way around, so here it is (below), (4) incorrect as supplied, and (5) with the filter reversed to put the multicoated side facing inwards. Note the reduced flare spots. And (6) without a filter.
 - **SHARPNESS:** As a rule, filters don't affect sharpness, unless it's with a poor quality filter used with a long lens that magnifies imperfections. See comments in the reviews. That aside, the main problem to consider is flare rather than sharpness.
 - **VIGNETTING:** Most lens manufacturers allow for one filter to be fitted without it protruding so far that it encroaches into the image and darkens the corners. It's not a given with ultra wide-angle lenses though, so if in doubt choose one with a slim-line mount. In the reviews, how far each filter protrudes is given as the mount depth.
- There is also optical vignetting that's unavoidable with conventional filters of this type when using wide-angles, and the wider the lens, the stronger the effect. It's caused by light from the edges passing through the filter at an angle, making the glass effectively thicker and therefore darker. It's easily corrected in post-processing.



B+W MRC TEN STOP & SIX STOP

Tested: B+W 110 ND3.0 MRC and B+W 106 ND1.8 MRC

Price: 110 £155 (77mm)/106 £155 (77mm)

Coating: Multicoated both sides

Mount depth: 4.5mm

Contact: www.bpluswfilters.co.uk



THE GERMAN B+W brand is generally reckoned to be the best in the screw-fit filters business. While Hoya and perhaps one or two others might claim equal status, B+W is certainly very high quality and its filters are distinguished by their weighty brass mounts – said to run more smoothly in the lens mounting threads.

The ten-stop 110 version has been around for quite a few years now, and it's still very good, still very expensive, and lost none of its characteristic light orange cast. It's made from multicoated dyed glass and is also available in a cheaper single-coated version. However, B+W's MRC multi-resistant coating is particularly good at suppressing flare and is easy to clean – finger prints wipe off, raindrops leave no drying marks.

That warm orange cast may put some buyers off, but it's deliberate and, B+W claims, after adjustment in post-processing (or applying a custom White Balance) it gives the most accurate and neutral colours, especially in the invisible spectrum that can be a problem with extreme ND filters. While that was certainly true a few years ago with some filters plagued by infrared pollution, today there are more neutral ND options available that perform extremely well.

The ten-stop 110 version checked out with an actual density of 10.6 stops, making it the darkest filter here. The 106 six-stopper, which is identical to the 110 apart from density and a milder orange cast, measured 6.3 stops. Both filters produced excellent colour after correction, with strong flare resistance, and sharpness unaffected. So in terms of ultimate image quality, both B+Ws come highly recommended.

VERDICT

All extreme ND filters need at least some slight colour correction, so that's a minor issue provided the results are worth it. With B+W, they are – though the price is a bit steep.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★☆
Value	★★★☆☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Haida Pro-II MC IRND / 100X100MM / TEN STOP

Tested: Haida Pro-II MC 3.0, Pro-II MC IRND 3.0 and ND 3.0 100x100mm

Price: Pro-II MC £53 (77mm) / Pro-II MC IRND £55 (77mm) / 100x100mm £65

Coating: Pro-II multicoated one side; IRND multicoated both sides;
100x100 uncoated

Mount depth (Pro-II and IRND) 3.1mm

Contact: www.camergearuk.com



THREE TEN-STOP ND filters from the relatively new Haida brand, manufactured in China. Haida has been attracting attention for both quality and keen prices. Its range of glass ten-stop ND filters has been expanded with the Pro-II 3.0 that adds multicoating, a new IRND version with extra coating for even better control of infrared, plus the uncoated 100x100mm variety for slot-in filter systems, complete with a foam-sealing gasket and a Velcro'd storage wallet.

All three filters came in very close to their stated density, with the Pro-II MC measuring exactly ten stops, the Pro-II MC IRND at 9.7 and the 100x100mm version a tad higher at 10.4 stops. None of these filters showed any detrimental effect on sharpness or image quality.

The Pro-II MC and 100x100mm filters both had a slight orange cast before correction in post-processing, while the extra front coating of the IRND version eliminated that to deliver almost perfect neutrality. None showed any evidence of infrared light pollution – and the colour test was conducted in bright sunlight rich in IR – though the belt-and-braces provided by the IRND coating is very welcome. Strangely, the multicoating of the Pro-II MC is only on the outside surface on our test sample, when it should be on the inside. Accordingly, it performed no better than uncoated filters in the flare test, yet mounting it back-to-front produced much better results. These filters offer good value for money, if assembled correctly – this was perhaps a one-off error in assembly, but we couldn't source a replacement unit to re-test in time to verify this. Still, something to look out for and be aware of if you opt for this brand.

VERDICT

All great value buys, particularly the IRND for its neutrality and rear multicoating, and also the 100x100mm that brings more choice to the relatively limited slot-in filter market.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★

Heliopan Grey ND TEN STOP & 6.7 STOP

Tested: Heliopan Grey ND 3.0 and 2.0

Price: 3.0 £76 (77mm) / £70 2.0 (77mm)

Coating: Single coating both sides

Mount depth: 4mm

Contact: www.teamworkphoto.com



HELIOPAN IS ANOTHER famous German brand, renowned for quality since 1949. The specification of these two ND filters is similar to B+W – also made from Schott glass with a quite obvious light orange colour cast, and having reassuringly heavy brass mounts for smoother-running threads. However, the Heliopans are unusual in having no serrations around the outer edge for a better grip. A small point, but an unnecessary omission given how easy it is to drop these things when fumbling in the field.

The ten-stop Grey ND 3.0 measured 10.1 stops density, and the claimed 6.7-stop Grey ND 2.0 came out at 7.1 stops. Heliopan states that all its filters have at least one coating on each surface, and that should be easy enough to see, but there's no visible coating on these Heliopans, and more to the point, they performed exactly like uncoated filters in the flare test with the giveaway pair of additional coloured spots appearing. This is nothing too serious though, and can usually be worked around in occasionally difficult situations, often with just a slight change of angle if, for example, the sun is actually in the frame.

The orange cast is quite marked on the darker 3.0 filter, less so on the 2.0, though both need correction in post processing for optimum results. And when that easy task is done, the result is excellent colour rendering throughout the visible spectrum, with no evidence of infrared light creeping through. Sharpness and image quality is unaffected.

Heliopan filters are available in an unusually wide range of sizes too, from 37mm right up to 105mm, in densities from one stop to 13 stops. Plenty to choose from!

VERDICT

The question of the coating aside, these Heliopans are high quality filters giving excellent all-round image quality once the mild orange cast is removed. German-made at a fair price.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★

Hoya ProND 1000 & ProND 200 TEN STOP & 7.7-STOP

Tested: Hoya ProND 1000 and Hoya ProND 200

Price: ND1000 £85 (77mm), ND200 £95 (77mm)

Coating: Multicoated both sides

Mount depth: 5.5mm

Contact: www.intro2020.co.uk



WHEN HOYA, THE world's largest manufacturer of optical glass and filters, puts its weight behind new technology, it's going to be something special. These ProND filters are not made of conventional dyed glass, but are coated with evaporated metal, applied in a vacuum chamber. Hoya has labelled the process ACCU-ND and launched a full range of ND filters from two to ten stops, in sizes from 49mm to 82mm. The Hitech Firecrest ND, also reviewed here, uses the same technology, as do one or two other manufacturers.

Because the metallic coating blocks light equally across all colours of both the visible and invisible spectrums, including UV and the often troublesome infrared, they promise to be inherently neutral with consistently accurate density. They are also immune to the optical vignetting common to all dyed glass NDs when used with wide-angles, where light around the edges passes through the filter at an angle, making the glass effectively thicker, and therefore darker. All these beneficial aspects were borne out in testing, with effectively zero vignetting, very neutral colour, densities bang on spec and minimal flare.

With the ProND 1000 filter, though, there was a small issue with sharpness towards the edges of the frame. It looks unusual, not so much a softening of detail, but almost like camera-shake or a faint shadow appearing around strong light/dark transitions. It's slight, possibly passing unnoticed, but landscapers in particular tend to want as much detail as possible all over the frame. It didn't affect the ProND 200 version or the Hitech Firecrest ND, even on unnecessarily close pixel peeping, but it's definitely there on the ProND 1000.

VERDICT

This new technology is promising, with excellent neutrality and a welcome absence of vignetting. But there is a minor edge sharpness issue with the darker ProND 1000 version.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★☆
Value	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Lee Filters Big & Little Stopper TEN STOP & SIX STOP

Tested: Lee Filters Big Stopper ten stop and Little Stopper six stop

Price: £100 100x100mm both versions

Coating: Uncoated

Mount depth: n/a

Contact: www.leefilters.com



ALMOST NOTORIOUS FOR being continuously on back-order, the ten-stop Lee Big Stopper remains the number one choice for most slot-in system filter users. Not that there's been a great deal of choice, with Haida only recently joining Hitech to offer commonly available 100x100mm alternatives. Also quite new to the market is the Lee Filters Little Stopper, a milder six-stop version, and both filters are also available in 75x75mm for the Lee Seven5 holder and 150x150mm for the giant SW system. There are money-saving kits too, including both Big and Little Stoppers.

Unlike Lee Filters's famous hand-dipped graduated resin filters manufactured in-house, the Stopper twins are dyed glass, made exclusively for Lee in East Asia. Lee Filters maintains that a good quality extreme ND filter is not possible with resin, and that fact has been borne out by others in the past, with resin NDs producing severe infrared interference problems and uncorrectable colours. The Lee Filters's Stoppers suffer none of that, at least in part due to the mild blue tint that extends into the IR spectrum. When corrected in post-processing, this results in clean colours throughout. Density measured 10.3 stops for the Big Stopper, and 6.3 stops for the Little Stopper.

Both Stoppers come with a foam gasket on the rear, for a good light-tight seal with the holder, and they're uncoated. Lee Filters say that coating would increase the cost substantially for relatively small benefit, though it does mean the filters are more prone to flare than screw-fit multicoated options, though the difference is slight and only noticeable in critical situations. Neither filter had any impact on sharpness.

VERDICT

Both high quality ND filters, with the Little Stopper particularly well suited to the golden hour. Still pricey though, and no longer the automatic choice for 100x100mm slot-in systems.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★☆
Value	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★☆

Hitech Firecrest ND SEVEN STOP

Tested: Formatt-Hitech Firecrest ND seven stop

Price: £85 (77mm)

Coating: Multicoated Mount depth: 3.4mm

Contact: www.formatt-hitech.com

MADE IN THE UK, Formatt-Hitech is an early pioneer of the new 'evaporated metal' process. It has developed the Firecrest ND technology very effectively and many popular sizes are already on back-order. The full range includes pretty much every option of density, in screw-fit or square slot-in varieties. Rated at seven stops, the Firecrest ND 2.1 measured exactly to spec. Colour was not quite neutral though, with a mild green cast. Sharpness was unaffected, with no sign of the edge sharpness issues of the (much darker) Hoya ProND 1000. Flare resistance is high, while vignetting is effectively nil.



VERDICT

Impressive performance all round, and the green cast cleans up easily in post-processing. No wonder there's a waiting list.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★☆
Overall	★★★★★

LCW ND500 MC NINE STOP

Tested: LightCraftWorkshop ND500 MC

Price: £65 (77mm)

Coating: Multicoated one side Mount depth: 4.8mm

Contact: www.premier-ink.co.uk

LIGHTCRAFTWORKSHOP is a lesser known Chinese brand though its multicoated glass ND500 MC has been a top seller for years. Over time, improvements have been made, increasing the density a fraction (now exactly nine stops), and reducing the bluish colour tint to neutrality. The multicoating is on one side, though it's not the only filter to have that fitted towards the front where it is less beneficial, particularly against ghost flare spots when very bright light sources (eg sun) get reflected off the shiny surface of the sensor, and back again off the rear of the filter.



VERDICT

Very neutral, with high sharpness and high-flare resistance (when fitted the right way around) at a good price.

Build quality	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★

Kood ND400 8.7 STOP

Tested: Kood ND400 8.7 stop

Price: £50 P-type slot-in

Coating: Multicoated both sides Mount depth: n/a

Contact: www.koodinternational.com

KOOD'S KEENLY PRICED graduated filters did very well in our recent review. While the resin grads are UK manufactured, Kood has followed others by importing this dyed glass extreme ND. It's multicoated, and only £50 in P-type fitting, though the slot-in holder was never designed for this and a bit of DIY is needed to seal against light leaks. The rated density of 8.7 stops checked out a bit lower at eight dead, though that's hardly a problem. There's a slight green cast, but when corrected in post-processing colour quality was excellent. Sharpness is unaffected and the flare resistance high.



VERDICT

The Kood ND400 is the cheapest here, yet also one of the best. The P-type holder isn't ideally suited though.

Build quality	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★



Haida

Heliopan

Test conclusion

A FEW YEARS AGO there would have been clear winners, and some even clearer losers, but manufacturers have upped their game and all these filters can be recommended with few caveats.

There are density differences that are down to individual choice, but otherwise perhaps the key deciding factor is mostly cost. Some users may also be swayed by better neutrality, but that's really a minor issue providing the post-processed image is good – and they all are.

Purely based on value for money then, the top spot goes to the Haida Pro-II MC IRND for excellent all-round performance at £55 in 77mm screw-fit. The Haida ND 3.0 is another good buy in the 100x100mm slot-in category. They're both ten stoppers, so of the lighter-toned six-to-seven-stop variety, the Heliopan Grey ND 2.0 also scores a Best Buy at £70 for 77mm screw-fit. But you'll get great results from any of these filters.

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'JETTY'



Jetty was photographed by Mark Bauer using the Lee Filter's Little Stopper and 0.6 ND Hard Grad filter.



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100mm

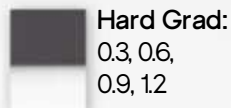


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0.9, 1.2

from £85.00



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0.3, 0.6,
0.9, 1.2

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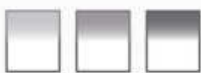


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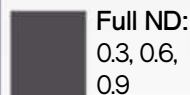
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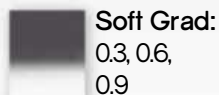
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0.3, 0.6,
0.9

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0.3, 0.6,
0.9

£52.00



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0.3, 0.6,
0.9

£52.00

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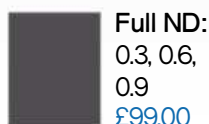


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0.9
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
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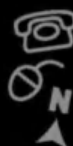
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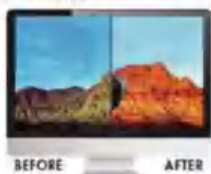
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Birds of Prey Workshop, Bedford

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April 16th, 17th; Private flying displays on pre-determined flightpath helps you to focus on birds in flight. Excellent opportunities with carefully chosen backgrounds. Also static shots in outstanding natural locations. Jesses carefully hidden. This location boasts one of the largest collections of Birds of Prey in the UK. White tailed Sea Eagle, Bald Eagles, Hawks, Owls, Falcons, Kestrels, Buzzards and Long Eared Owl (new).

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July 13, 14, 15; Inside enclosures 'til sunset. Also Owls, Snakes, Badgers, Polecats, Weasels, Stoats, Hedgehog, Harvest Mice & various Deer. 2 sessions with the foxes, sometimes only inches away from you. Inside enclosures with Foxes, Otters, Scottish Wildcats. Badgers GUARANTEED. No fences or wires to shoot through.

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Farne Islands Puffins (Over 5 hrs photography)

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Pro Birds of Prey Shoot, Bamburgh, Northumberland.

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June 18th, 19th; Amazing photography opportunities. Hill top views overlooking large extensive valleys and seascapes. Rocks and gorse bushes abound. Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Snowy Owl, Eagle Owl and Barn Owl will be placed in really natural situations. Jesses will be hidden where possible for those perfect 'in the wild' shots. Can combine with Bass/Farne as this location is very close to the Farne Islands.

Pro Birds of Prey Shoot (2) with Short Eared Owl, Northumberland.

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June 14th, 21st, 27th; Both the falconer and the birds are different to workshop above. Venues are about 20 miles apart. We will take two of the birds down to an amazingly beautiful, little known waterfall. This will provide a unique backdrop for your subjects. The falls are surrounded by trees covered with mosses and lichens. We will photograph up to 10 different species of birds, mainly British. Maximum 8 photographers.

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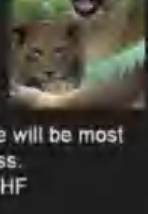
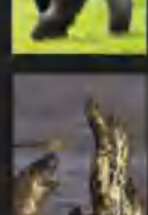
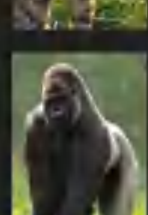
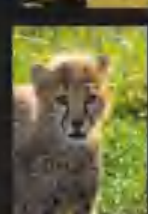
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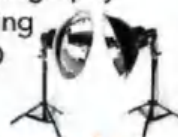
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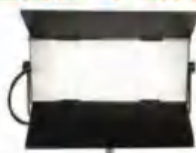
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